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Mr. *James Pierce's*
REMARKS
ON
Dr. Wells's Letters
TO
Mr. Peter Dowley;
AND TO
A Dissenting Parishioner :
WITH
His several Defences of those
REMARKS.

Wherein the Doctor's Writings against the Dissenters are fully consider'd, in Eight Letters.

Also some CONSIDERATIONS on the sixth Chapter of the Abridgment of the *London Cases*; Containing a Vindication of the Office of Baptism, and particularly of the Sign of the Cross.

With a Postscript to *Dr. Wells*, in *Octavo*.

L O N D O N,
Printed by *J. Humfreys*, for *John Lawrence*,
at the *Angel* in the *Poultry*. 1711.



REMARKS

O N

Dr. *WELLS*

H I S

LETTER

T O

Mr. *Peter Dowley.*

In a Letter to a Friend.

The Fourth Edition.

L O N D O N,

Printed by *J. Humfreys*, for *John Lawrence*,
at the *Angel* in the *Poultry*. 1710.

REMARKS

ON

DR. WELLS

HIS



Mr. Peter Dingley.

In a Letter to a Friend.

1753. Fourth Edition.

LONDON.

Printed by J. H. Stanger for John Lawrence,
at the Angel in the Strand. 1753.

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S I R,

I Now send you my Remarks upon the Letter you were pleas'd to leave with me. My Curiosity had been indeed gratified before with the Perusal of some Part of it in the Booksellers Shop; so much, I remember, as satisfied me that the Dissenters, were not like to gain much Conviction, or suffer much Prejudice by the Arguments of the Author. The Account you gave me of the great Industry and the mighty Boastings wherewith it has been dispersed, has, I confess, made me willing to give it a more serious Perusal than I design'd, and to bestow some Remarks upon the Arguments in it, which I must own, I thought deserv'd none, as I remember I said to a Friend who told me, that Mr. D. design'd not to bestow any upon it.

His Prefatory Discourse I shall pass over, being willing to allow every Man his Liberty, to discharge his Duty according to the Light of his own Conscience; my Design is to shew that the Doctor has mistaken the Dissenters.

His Letter consists of two Parts, the first of which is design'd to shew that the Non-conformist Ministers are false Teachers, upon the Account of the false Doctrine taught by them. And the Doctor has here singled out eleven particular Instances of false Doctrine taught by them.

But I desire the Reader to observe, that some of them are such as the Dissenters do not teach, and therein the Doctor entertains his Reader with Calumnies instead of Arguments. In others he represents not fairly the Dissenters Sense, but sets down a little part of what they say, and the rest is what he thinks he is best able to refute; and withal, his Instances are in Things so very far from being essential to Religion, that a Person would not deserve to be reputed a false Teacher for the sake of them. It is not every little Error that's sufficient to denominate the Man that teaches it, in gross, a false Teacher; the Denomination among such fallible Creatures as we are, is to be made, *a majori*, and little doubtful Disputations should be overlook'd. When I see a Man so unmercifully lay about him, and condemn every one that is perhaps guilty of a Mistake in things of little Moment, he seems to me to forget that he's a Man, and so liable to mistake, and looks as if he affected the Air of his Holiness, and were setting up for Infallibility, at least in *Carbæda*, and to assume to himself the final Decision of Controversies. I confess the least trifling Mistake in a Per-

son's Doctrine will, according to the Rigour of the Words, bespeak him a false Teacher, that is, so far. But Mens common Circumstances have taught the World so much Civility, as not to bestow this odious Character upon one another, where the Mistake is not of some considerable Importance and Moment. And truly without this Civility, I fear the Doctor, notwithstanding his Assurance, must come into the number of false Teachers, even for his Misrepresentation of the Dissenters. Nor can he have good Reason to think, that he shall be able to do the Church of England any Service by this way of arguing. It will certainly cast Reproach upon a considerable number of Conformists. There are many Things controverted among themselves, and one side or other must certainly at this rate be false Teachers. The Doctrine of Passive Obedience and Non-Resistance is either true or false; if true, a great number of the Conformists were false Teachers at the Revolution, and continue so ever since; if false, the Generality of them were false Teachers before. I might instance in the *Calvinist* and *Arminian* Doctrines, or the most important Controversy, lately started, about the Rights of a Convocation, and the Power of adjourning the Lower House. These Disputes would furnish us with a brave List of false Teachers, and perhaps few Conformists could wholly escape: If they were found Orthodox in one, yet they might prove Heterodox in another Controversy, and so must be false Teachers. Now I shall proceed to the Doctor's Instances, and in alledging them I shall first set down his Assertion (that the Reader may see what's his Design) and then his Arguments from which he draws it.

(1.) His first Assertion is, *That whosoever shall teach that kneeling is not a Posture very suitable and proper for Prayer, but a piece of Superstition, he is justly to be condemned as a false Teacher.*

The Reader may see here, it is for his Ease we set down the Conclusion first, for that saves us the Labour of examining his Arguments. We own the Conclusion, and then what need of Arguments to prove it to us? It is the common Practice of Dissenters to use this Posture in Prayer in their Families, and I verily believe in their Closets. They own it is a very proper Posture in Prayer: But the Examples we have in Scripture of another Posture in Prayer, I mean standing, satisfies them that the other is not absolutely necessary, and therefore they prefer the first, and only practise the latter when most convenient; and if I mistake not, the Churchmen as well as Dissenters judge both proper, and act accordingly.

I know no way to excuse the Doctor here, since the Error he opposes is not held by any of the Dissenters, I think not by the Quakers themselves; and if he is a false Teacher that is guilty of any little Mistake, I desire the Doctor to consider what he is that

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notoriously prevaricates to render his Neighbour odious.

2. His second Assertion is, *That whosoever teaches the using Forms of Prayer, is not most highly acceptable to God, or less acceptable than, or not equally acceptable as New, or Extempore Prayer, is a false Teacher.*

While the Doctor lays down this Assertion in opposition to the Dissenters, he runs into several Mistakes about their Highness, which it is fit we should correct before we consider his Arguments.

1. He represents the Dissenters, as thinking Prayer acceptable to God upon the Account of its being Extempore, which is not the Opinion of any of us that I know. The Dissenters think that Prayer is most acceptable to God, which is offer'd in the Name of Christ, by a pure Heart, and with devout and suitable Affections: They do not think conceived Prayer will be acceptable without these Qualifications, or that praying by a Form will be unacceptable when thus qualified.

2. They don't think that a Form of Prayer is absolutely unlawful. I speak now of the Generality of Dissenters (and some few weak Persons in any Party are not to be made the Standard) who teach their Children Forms of Prayer (which they would not do if this were their Opinion) and who advise others to them that are not able to do without them.

And I desire the Doctor to take Notice, that the Assembly of Divines have asserted the same thing concerning the Lord's Prayer, that he himself *Larger Catechism, p. 146. Compare the Directory of Prayer after Sermon.* do's, who not only call it a Form of Prayer, but expressly say, that it is not only for Direction as a Pattern, according to which we are to make our other Prayers, but may also be us'd as a Prayer; and they argue this by comparing the two Texts alledg'd by the Doctor.

3. As to the Comparison between these two ways of Praying, tho' there is some Diversity of Opinions among the Dissenters, yet they generally agree herein, that as to themselves, they find conceiv'd Prayer does more engage their Attention to the Business they are about; and that since this is a very lawful Help against those wandring Thoughts, to which we are all so prone in that Duty, they cannot see any Reason why they should not have their Liberty. They add too, that as our Desires are the chief things in our Prayers, they think they may as well lead as follow our Words; and that it is as proper when we have to do with God, who looks most to our Hearts in that Duty, that it should be out of the abundance of our Hearts, that our Mouths should utter the Words wherewith we clothe our Requests, as that our Hearts should desire out of the abundance of the Words that are put into our Mouths; and as they think this a Reason for the Use
of

of conceiv'd Prayer in private, so the same will hold as to the Person that officiates in publick ; and that it will not a little affect the Auditory, upon whom the visible Disposition of the Speaker has no small Influence, and whose Affections in a great measure follow his. For he is most likely to have his Auditory seriously affected either in Preaching or Praying, with or without a Form, that is most so himself. They add, That in Publick Prayers, the Auditory's not knowing before-hand the Prayers which are offer'd, is a Means to engage their Attention, and to help against the Evil mention'd before ; and that there is good Reason for the Use of conceiv'd Prayer, because no Form can be so contriv'd as to reach all Cases.

4. But the main difference between the Conformists and Non-conformists is this, That the former do pretend to a Power of imposing a Form of Prayer upon all the worshipping Assemblies of this Nation ; and the other do desire to see a fair Proof that Christ has lodg'd such a Power as this in them. They profess they have not as yet been able to meet with any such thing, tho' some of them have made a diligent Search after it ; and withal, they can't esteem the Form impos'd the most exactly fitted to answer its end.

Now having thus set the Dissenters Opinion in a true Light, let us see how far his Arguments will affect them ; *Not to mention (says he) several Forms of Prayer (or the like) prescrib'd by God himself in the Old Testament, as evident from the New, &c.* and I am well satisfy'd with the Doctor's not mentioning these Forms, for these two Reasons ; (1.) Because it is dubious whether there be any Form of publick Prayer (strictly so call'd) prescrib'd in the Old Testament. (2.) If there were such, it would not signify much in our Controversy, because there is no Dispute whether God may, if he please, impose Forms of Prayer ; but the only Question is, Whether he has empower'd Men to do it : And I suppose the Doctor will not infer the latter from the former.

Passing therefore these Forms, he comes to the New Testament, and argues from the Lord's Prayer, and cites *Matth. 6. 9. Luke 11. 2.* and then he adds, *And that it was our Saviour's Design, that this Form should be used as long as Christianity it self lasted in this World, is plain from his limiting no time after which the Use of this Prayer should cease, and be no longer requisite ; but on the contrary expressing himself indefinitely, and without any Limitation.* Thus *Luke 11. 2. When, i. e. whensoever (for the Greek Word is the Indefinite Particle, ὅταν whensoever) or in whatever Period of Time, or Age of the World ye pray, Say, Our Father which art, &c.*

For my own part, I am satisfy'd, it may be us'd as a Form, and do believe the Dissenters will generally grant that, as any other

ther proper Scripture-Expressions; so these of the Lord's Prayer; all of them, as they stand, may be us'd in Prayer. But that which I would remark upon the Doctor's Words, now I have told him my own Opinion, is, 1. That 'tis a Disservice to Truth for a Person to set it on a weak Foundation; this tempts Persons to question it, who before perhaps inclin'd to embrace it. Now this I think the Doctor does, when he lays so much stress upon the indefinite Particle *ὅταν*, without a Limitation of Time; I will only propose to the Doctor a Parallel way of Reasoning: Suppose therefore that a Man should argue from *Luke* 12. 11. and *Matt* 10. 19. that whenever a Person is persecuted for his Religion, and is to appear before a Magistrate, it is a Sin for him to premeditate a Defence, and that he's bound to depend on the immediate Inspiration of the Spirit, and that because the indefinite Particle *ὅταν* is made use of in both places. I ask then, Would the Doctor allow the Argument? I fancy he wou'd as much dislike this as *Extempore* Prayer or Preaching. 'Twere easy to give more Instances of this Nature. 'Tis a plain Case then, that when there is no express Limitation set down, yet there may be one sufficiently imply'd in the Circumstances, and the Nature of the Thing. As here, when Inspiration ceas'd, certainly this Precept can't be suppos'd to bind; and therefore, 2. The Doctor should have prov'd, That there are no such Circumstances as may be reasonably suppos'd to imply a Limitation. I will only put him in mind of one Circumstance which perhaps some may be ready to alledge. The Occasion of Christ's Teaching his Disciples may serve for this; they were at first raw and ignorant, and so might have special Need of being taught thus to Pray, and therefore the Doctor should shew, that even when the Reason assign'd for the teaching them this Prayer at first ceas'd, that yet they were bound to the use of it. 3. I would ask the Doctor, who has given him Authority to restrain this indefinite Particle *ὅταν*, and to enlarge it at Pleasure? That is, who has assur'd him that it must extend to every Period of the World, and not to every particular individual Time in every such Period, wherein Men pray to God? *i. e.* In short, why should not this Indefinite be equivalent to an Universal? And be as much as this, As often as ye Pray, Say, &c. and then I fear the Doctor and his Friends will not come off handsomly, and we must change the Fashion, and say both before and after Meat a somewhat longer Grace. 4. If the Obligation be so constant, how comes it to pass that through the Acts of the Apostles we find no mention of it, nor in the most early Times of Christianity? Particularly, Why have we nothing of this in that most exact Account given us of the Manner and Order of their Worship by *Justin Martyr*, in his 2d *Apology*?

In the next place, the Doctor argues from the Example of our Lord in the Garden, *Mat. 26. 44.* who prayed, saying the same Words three times; and upon this he likewise grounds his 3^d and 4th Instances; and therefore I shall here endeavour distinctly to state this Matter. And first we will suppose with the Doctor, That our Lord pray'd these three times by a Form, or rather the first *Extempore*, and made that *Extempore* Prayer a Form in the two latter, and that he us'd every time exactly the same words; and, I say, this won't make much to our present Controversy, for the clearing of which I desire the Reader to observe,

1. If it be inferr'd from hence, That a Form is not in it self unlawful, and when offer'd up with suitable Affections, is pleasing to God (as it will yield this Remark understood in his way) the thing inferr'd is granted by us, and therefore he need not prove it.

2. Our Lord's Circumstances were every time the same, and so the same words might well suit each time, whereas our Circumstances so continually vary, that no Form can be suppos'd always to suit them; and therefore to argue from what our Lord did then, to what we should do constantly, is not fair.

3. As the time between each Prayer was very short, and the Circumstances of our Lord the same, and his Affections the same in each, it is no great wonder that he should use the same Expressions; and so we say, that it would be a vain and simple Humour for a Person in praying about Matter in all its Circumstances exactly the same, to be scrupulous about using any Expressions, merely because he had us'd them in another Prayer before.

4. Our Lord's Prayer was his own, and so of Divine Composition; and surely it can't hence be argued, that I am bound to use a Form of another Man's making, who can't pretend to such an Original.

5. I desire it may be observ'd, that there was not the same Reason for our Lord's not tying up himself to a Form, that there may be why we should not. If we find that the constant use of a Form gives more Liberty and Scope to our Thoughts to wander, and therefore as a lawful means to help us against it, we prefer conceiv'd Prayer to human Forms, yet far be it from us to imagine our Spotless Perfect Redeemer, subject to the same Evil with our selves, or to stand in any need of the like Remedy.

And thus having giv'n an Answer to him upon his own Supposition; I shall a little debate the Matter, whether it be reasonable to allow this Supposition, That our Lord us'd every time the same Form of Words; and I shall comprehend what I have to say here in these following Remarks.

(1.) That

(1.) That 'tis very probable our Lord was each time a considerable while in Prayer, and that the Account the Evangelists have given us of his Prayer, is not of the very Words and Syllables, but only of the Matter and Substance of it. I cannot easily think that our Lord, who on other Occasions spent whole Nights in Prayer, did upon this extraordinary Occasion, when he was so deeply affected, and his Soul was exceeding sorrowful, even unto Death, content himself with so short a time in Prayer, as must be supposed, unless this Account be allow'd. I appeal for this to Circumstances : Who can think that our Lord should three times successively find every one of his Disciples asleep, upon his leaving them only for two or three Minutes ? And supposing we have all his Prayer, it could not be much more ; for he went but a little way from them, as all agree ; he went forward a little, say both *Matthew* and *Mark* : And *Luke* expresses it more clearly, about a Stone's Cast. And besides, add to this, what *Luke* has added, and it is yet more clear that more time must be allow'd, *Luke 22. 43, 44. And there appear'd to him an Angel, and strengthened him : And being in an Agony, he pray'd more earnestly : And his Sweat was as it were great Drops of Blood falling upon the Ground.* Certainly this will shew that the Evangelists have only given us a summary Account of his Prayer.

(2.) The Evangelists, tho' they all agree in the Sense and Matter of his Prayer, yet set it down with such a difference of Expression, as shews they design'd not to give us an exact Account of his very Words : In *St. Matthew* it is thus ; *O my Father, if it be possible let this Cup pass from me ; nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt.* In *St. Mark*, *Abba Father, all things are possible unto thee, take this Cup from me ; nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt.* And in *St. Luke*, *If thou be willing, remove this Cup from me ; nevertheless, not my Will, but thine be done.*

(3.) If our Lord us'd a Form of Prayer, that is, us'd the very same Words and Expressions, then he must do so all the three times (according to the Doctor's Argument, and as he allows) for the Evangelist said he pray'd the third time, saying the same Words ; and *St. Mark* says of the second time, that he said the same Words that he had said the first. But this can't be, for this very plain Reason, because the same Evangelist has set down his Words the first and second time differently.

The first time thus, *O my Father, if it be possible let this Cup pass from me ; nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt.* And the second time thus ; *O my Father, if this Cup may not pass from me, except I drink it, thy Will be done.* This Difference may be easily accounted for according to my Notion, but not according to the Doctor's.

(4.) as to those Words (which the Doctor insists on, and which is the only Objection against this Interpretation) τὸν αὐτὴν λόγον

ἑκ τῶν, which are us'd by two Evangelists, and we have render'd, *Saying the same Words*; we may render them, *Saying the same Thing*. So we have render'd that Word elsewhere, ἐρωτήσω ὑμᾶς κατὰ λόγον ἓνα, *I also will ask you one Thing*. It is certain, that the Word ἓν which signifies primarily a Word, is put often to signify a thing; and the 70 Interpreters, when 'tis us'd so, have often render'd it by ῥῆμα & λόγος. For this latter, among many other Instances, see 1 Kings 12. 30. Deut. 1. 32. and in this use of the word, I think it is evident the Evangelists have here imitated them; besides that, other Authors would bear them out in it.

His 3d and 4th Instances (as I observ'd before) are grounded upon the same Text, and have nothing in them that needs any farther Answer.

(5.) In his next Instance, he is still establishing the same Assertion, but his Argument is taken from Eccles. 5. 2. *Be not rash with thy Mouth, and let not thy Heart be hasty to utter any thing before God*. From whence the Doctor argues, that he who prays by a Form, is secur'd against Rashness, as he may consider before-hand of every Word; but he that prays without a Form, is not sufficiently secur'd from any Accident so disturbing him, as to make him let fall rash or hasty Words or Expressions; and therefore he asserts, *That he that prays by a Form, prays in such a manner as enables him to pray more agreeably to the Rule above-mentioned*. In answer to which,

1. Let us try how far the Doctor's Argument will go: for 'tis a pity it should not run out to its full Length. His Argument condemns plainly all those that use conceiv'd Prayer as rash and hasty; or at least as sinning in not using Means to be sufficiently secur'd against it; which I take to be a Man's Duty.

Now this Consequence falls hard upon the Primitive Christians, all Protestants, and even upon the Church of England her self, who allows this way of Praying, and many of whose Ministers, without any Disturbance, practise it.

And I will tell the Reader what I have from a Person of good Credit, that a certain Bishop now living in Ireland, when pleading for Forms of Prayer, was yet pleas'd to say, that in private he was against Persons tying themselves up to them: and that if he were assur'd of a Person, that he never prayed but by a Form, he should very much doubt his Sincerity: and therefore in the Family where he then was, he us'd conceiv'd Prayer.

2. Let us imitate the Doctor's way of Reasoning, and try if we can't with more Strength argue from the Practise of our Lord. If Christ had thought, with the Doctor, that conceiv'd Prayer was rash and hasty, he would have forbidden it, or have left no room for it, either by providing himself, or by his Apostles Forms of Prayer

Prayer for all Cases; or by letting us know that he had left a Power to some certain Persons to draw up Forms for his Worship, or by commanding all Persons to draw up Forms for themselves, and then constantly to use them: but since he has not done any thing of this Nature, we have no reason to think that our Lord had any such Apprehension.

3. Rashness in Prayer does not always lie in the Words and Syllables made use of, but sometimes in the Requests themselves, and the Peremptoriness of asking, &c. If a Person asks things not according to the Mind and Will of God, or not with due Reserve and Submission to the Will of God, he may be said to be rash; but that a Request must necessarily be rash, that is not form'd into an exact Period, is what I see no Reason to believe. If the Doctor please, he may call it so, but he must give me leave to think that God, who looks chiefly at the Heart, judges very differently of it. The Apostle speaks of such Prayer as consisted so much in Desires, as to want Expressions, *Rom. 8. 26, 27.* (and I hope that was not by a Form) and yet he assures us that 'tis acceptable to God, and I can't devise what should induce a learned Man to give such a new and strange Account of that Text, and to make the Holy Spirit our Intercessor at the Right Hand of God, and so confound his Work with that of our Redeemer, unless it were his Jealousy, that the common Interpretation, according to the received Notions of the Work of Christ, and of the Spirit, might have too kind an Aspect on conceived Prayer. But his Interpretation is so forc'd, that 'tis no wonder he has had few to follow him in it. And indeed that the serving an Hypothesis was the Reason of his giving that Interpretation, will not seem improbable to him, who considers that when he is not thus by-ass'd, he acknowledges with the Generality of Protestant Writers, that *Christ is the only Intercessor with the Father.* See *Col. 2. 19.* I will add, That God has let us know, that that Exactness of Speech, which is so highly esteem'd among Men, is not of the same Account with him, even by the Style in which the New Testament (or a great part of it to be sure) is written, which, as Learned Men have observ'd, is far from having that Exactness and Accuracy which is to be met with in other Authors. I am not, however, pleading for a careless and slovenly Expression, which tends only to bring the Worship of God into Contempt. But this is what I assert, that the Doctor has carry'd the matter too far, and that 'tis not a difficult thing for a Person to arrive to this, to be able to put his Desires into apt Expressions. And I query whether the Doctor thinks a Man more fit to make a Minister than a

Vide Gatake-
rum de Novi
Testamenti sti-
lo, contra Pfo-
chenium.

Sollicitor, that has not a tolerable Ability this Way?

4. Since the Doctor says, He that uses a Form *may thoroughly weigh afore-hand what he is to utter in his Prayer, and so may be sure to use no single Word that may be filed rash or hasty, or any other way indecent*; I suppose he will allow that when he has thus weighed the Matter, and finds any thing of this Nature in the Form he is to use, that he should first alter it. His weighing it will be to little purpose otherwise: And what then would the Doctor have a Non-conformist do, that has weighed the Established Form, and declares, that according to his best Judgment, he finds many things of this Nature?

5. The Text that the Doctor argues from, does relate to Vows, and not to Prayer. How mischievous rash Vows are may be seen by *Jephthah*: And it is certain that they are not to be made but with the greatest Care and Deliberation; and it is a great Argument of Weakness, for Persons upon every sudden Motion, without such care, to make Vows: And this we may argue from what follows, for the wise Man inforces this Rule by a Reason in the 3d Verse: *For a Dream cometh through the Multitude of Business, and a Fool's Voice is known by a Multitude of Words*. Where he compares a rash and a foolish Vow to a Dream: Easily made, as a Dream, is a loose Thought that comes into the Mind hurry'd with Business, without considering the Nature of the Thought; so a rash Vow is made without a distinct and prudent weighing of Matters; and as it is easily made, so it is as little regarded and as soon forgotten as a Dream. He therefore expressly speaks of Vows in the next Verses; *When thou vowest a Vow unto God, defer not to pay it; for he hath no Pleasure in Fools*. (Such Fools as are describ'd before, whose Voice in Vowing is like their Thoughts in Dreaming.) *Pay that which thou hast vow'd: Better it is, that thou shouldst not vow, than that thou shouldst vow and not pay. Suffer not thy Mouth to cause thy Flesh to sin; neither say thou before the Angel that it was an Error. Wherefore should God be angry at thy Voice, and destroy the Work of thy Hands*: (and then he repeats his former Reason a-

Bp. Patrick in his Annotations, speaking of Prayer and Vows, says the latter is most proper to the Place.

gain) *For in the Multitudes of Dreams and many Words* (that is, a Forwardness and Hastiness in Vowing) *there are also divers Vanities, but fear thou God*. Now as the Repetition of this Reason in the 7th Verse shews that the 4th, 5th, and 6th Verses about Vows do belong to what went before, and are to be connected with the

3d, so the 3d Verse is connected with the 2d; and is a Reason of it; and therefore the 2d Verse relates not to Prayer in General, but to Vows,

His 6th Assertion is, *That whosoever teaches that Preaching within-*

book, is of it self less efficacious or edifying than Preaching without-book (in short) is a false Teacher.

For my part, I never doubted of the Lawfulness of Preaching within-book, and the Dissenters are so far from judging as the Doctor represents, that every Man uses his Liberty; and many of them Preach within-book. I think all considerate Persons will easily agree with the Account which my Lord Bp. of Sarum, in his Pastoral Care, gives of this Matter. Certainly it is lawful and useful, where it is done well, and renders a Person more acceptable to his Auditory. But the Doctor's Argument being new and singular, comes now to be consider'd, and it is this; *Jerem. 36. 4, 5, 6.* Baruch wrote from the Mouth of Jeremiah all the Words of the Lord, &c. From whence he infers, *That the Wisdom of God judg'd it equally efficacious to declare his Will by reading it out of a Book, as to declare it by Word of Mouth, which being put into the present way of speaking, is as much as to say, that the Wisdom of God judg'd it equally edifying to read a Sermon, or preach within-book, as to preach without-book.* For 'tis evident that the Divine Goodness was desirous to bring the Jews to a sincere and timely Repentance, from the 3d and 7th Verses; and therefore 'tis but rational to suppose, that the Divine Goodness was willing to make use of the most efficacious ordinary Method to this great End and Purpose. Wherefore had the Divine Wisdom known that delivering his Will by Word of Mouth, or Preaching without-book, is a Method much more efficacious and edifying, than delivering his Will, or Preaching within-book; It is not to be suppos'd but that the Providence of God either would have so order'd Matters, as that the Prophet Jeremiah himself should have deliver'd his Message by word of Mouth, or else have order'd and enabled Baruch to have so deliver'd it, and not to have read it out of a Book. Doubtless the Reader is now fully convinc'd of the pestilent Heresie of these Dissenters, and for ever fortify'd against all Danger from the Doctrine of these false Teachers. Such an Argument better deserves a place in the Reasons of the Contempt of the Clergy, than a serious Answer. But to shew the Weakness of it, let these things be consider'd.

1. That his way of Arguing is fallacious. I mean, when he argues from the Divine Goodness, what God must necessarily do. The Divine Goodness, tho' it be infinite, does not always to the utmost exert it self; There are Reasons that we are not able oftentimes to penetrate, why it does not. God's Goodness towards Man in his State of Innocency, and his Willingness that he should be happy, are unquestionable; and yet we see we can't argue, that he must therefore do everything he might have done, if he pleas'd to prevent his Misery, or that he must necessarily hinder the Devil from tempting him to Sin. Or to put the Matter

a little closer ; God is not willing that *any should perish, but that all should come to Repentance*, 2 Pet. 3. 9. Will the Doctor therefore argue, That he uses the most efficacious and edifying ordinary Means, to this end, which those that have not, as well as with those that have the Light of the Gospel ? It is a Presumption for Men to go about to define how far God's Goodness will engage and oblige him to his Creatures, where he has not himself express'd it in his Word.

2. God had before sent his Message to them by his Prophet *Jeremiab*, and they had put him in Prison for it : And when they dealt so barbarously with his Servant, was it not reasonable he shou'd forbear to work a Miracle to set his Prophet at Liberty to speak to them himself, and that he shou'd deny the immediate Inspiration that was necessary to enable *Baruch* to speak without-book, supposing this the most efficacious Means ? Will the Doctor say, That the Divine Goodness always engages him to use the most efficacious Means, if any at all ? Or will he not allow God gradually to with-hold his Hand upon Mens Provocations ?

3. Let it but be consider'd, what may be reasonably thought to be the Cause of God's thus ordering these things to be written ; and it's plainly this, That whereas they had been displeas'd with the Prophet for declaring these things (for he only wrote what he had preach'd before, as appears by *ver. 2.* whence I cou'd argue as finely as the Doctor in this matter, if I were of his Humour) and thought to save themselves the trouble of hearing of them, by shutting up the Prophet in Prison ; God disappointed them, and orders his Prophet to write these so displeasing things, which was not only that *Baruch* might read them, but that they might read them themselves also ; *vid. ver. 21.* and not only so, but that being written, they might remain as a Memorial against them, and therefore after the Roll was read and burn'd, God orders another Roll to be written, *v. 27.* Let the Words of God by *Isaiab* be compar'd herewith, *Chap. 30. 8.* Now go write it before them in a Table, and note it in a Book, that it may be for the time to come, for ever ; That this is a rebellious People, &c. So that here is no more than what is ordinary. God deliver'd his Mind and Will by the Preaching, and then by the Writings of the Prophet. But in my Apprehension, if the Doctor would make any Use of this Text to such a kind of purpose, he shou'd rather have argu'd, That since Goodness inclin'd God to use the most efficacious Means with that People ; and at the same time he did not so order Matters by his Providence, That the Prophet should deliver his Message himself, but only by Proxy, That therefore 'tis as efficacious and edifying a way for a Minister to preach by Proxy,

as to preach himself; and consequently that the Doctor may as well edify his Parish, by sending his Clerk with a Copy of his Sermon, as by preaching himself; which wou'd be a pretty Device for the ease and profit of our Modern Pluralists, whom I hope a Man may speak against without incurring the Censure of a false Teacher.

In the next place the Doctor is pleas'd to make a Reflection on the Introducers of this way of conceiv'd Prayer: But we thank him, we are able to give a better Account of the Matter, than the doughty Author he refers to. The Doctor's Story is, *That one Cummin, a Popish Friar, in the 9th of Queen Eliz. (in order to draw off the People from the Church of England, and so to further the Ends of Popery) began to make use of the Artifice of Extempore Prayer. And afterwards another, Thomas Heath, follow'd the same crafty Method,* and for both these we are referr'd to the very Canonical and Apostolical Author Mr. Foxe's and *Firebrand's*. But in answer to the Doctor, and all those (who are not a few) who appeal to that Author, I say,

(1.) That we are secure of a much better Pattern: We have Patterns not only in the Old Testament, but in the New the Apostles; and we have the Example of the most primitive Christians to plead in our Behalf, and we are willing to stand and fall with these; and despise the impotent Malice of those who slander us as receiving it from *Cummin*.

(2.) 'Tis strange that *Cummin* should begin this in *England* in the 9th of *Queen Eliz.* when the Insufficiency of Forms had taught and constrain'd Persons to the use of it before, as may be seen in the Cases of the Martyrs; particularly *Dr. Taylor*.

But (3.) The whole Story is such a notorious Forgery, that no Man can lay stress upon it, without exposing the Reputation of his Judgment or his Honesty. If that piece does not carry in the Front of it all the Marks of Forgery; farewell all Criticism. And it is not only a Forgery, but a foolishly contriv'd one; and I have often wonder'd that our Enemies (who are subtil enough) should hide the Cheat no better. There is nothing of Consistency in any Circumstances of the Story. I desire the Reader only to peruse what *Dr. Collins* has wrote on this Subject, in his answer to *Dr. Scot's* Cases about Forms of Prayer, who has with so much Evidence prov'd the Forgery and Folly of both these Stories, That I can't but wonder that the Doctor and his Party do not blush to think of the printing, and much more of their so frequent citing such a paultry Imposture, which is not the only Instance of our Enemies using that Artifice against us, which we are however willing to forget, if they please to give us leave. However, as the Doctor appeals to this Author, I desire that when he is at leisure he wou'd take the pains to answer what is there said, or if he can't,

can't, that he beg Pardon of God and the World for endeavouring to wound the Reputation of his Brethren, by the Testimony of such a notorious Legend, or at least that he alledge it no more.

Next he tells us, *That the Papists preach without-book, and seldom or never within*, which I believe to be true, and no doubt their Reason is, because they judge it the most perswasive way, as I can't but own that, generally speaking, it is.

But then he infers, *That since 'tis a receiv'd Principle among the Dissenters, That 'tis not expedient or good to symbolize or agree with the Papists, in things belonging to Divine Worship; it clearly follows from this their own Principle, that they ought not to have so great an Esteem for Extempore Prayer, or for preaching without-book, since they have been or are practis'd by the Popish Priests themselves.*

This is only according to the Doctor's way of representing us, from whom we are to expect nothing fair. I hope the Cause is not Wilfulness, but rather such Weakness and Ignorance, as tho' it renders him unfit to write in the Controversie, yet may lessen his Guilt, when he comes to give up his Account.

This that the Doctor with so much assurance says is a receiv'd Principle among us, is rejected by us, as he has represented it.

We utterly deny any Principle that is so silly and foolish, whatever Contempt and Scorn the Doctor may think we deserve upon such an Account: And we might full as fairly say, That the contrary Assertion is held by our Adversaries; and that it is the receiv'd Principle of the Conformists, that it is expedient or good to symbolize or agree with the Papists in things belonging to Divine Worship.

I put it to the Doctor, whether (as despicable an Opinion as he is pleas'd to entertain of us) he thinks in his Conscience that we are so silly as to believe, that because the Papists use both Methods of Preaching and Praying within and without-book, that therefore we are to use neither? If the Doctor thinks so, let him shew what ground he has from our Writings for this his Opinion. Do's he think that he and his Party are the only Men that know that Satan can transform himself into an Angel of Light? Do's he think that we don't know that it is very possible for them to abuse that which is good, by applying it to a wrong End? Or does he believe that we think we are thereupon bound to lay aside the thing it self? Our Opinion is like to be better learn'd from a Friend, than an insulting scornful Adversary; and therefore the Reader may take it thus:

1. That we judge that no Man has a Power to add any religious Ceremonies to those that God has already appointed for his Worship There are some Circumstances that must be determin'd one

one way or another, or there can be no Worship perform'd, and such are those of Time and Place, &c. And therefore it is necessary that they with whom the Care of God's Worship is lodg'd, and who are to see to it, That the general Rules relating thereto be fulfill'd, should fix and settle these: That is, that every particular Church have a Power to order these things, so they do it to Edification. But when Men enjoin religious Ceremonies, let them be Protestants or Papists, we think that our Lord will bear us out in refusing to obey them, for which we appeal to the former part of the 15th of *Matthew*, which we think to be greatly parallel to our Case, and that wherein it differs, it renders our Case yet the more clear and plain. For our Lord himself determines the Matter, *That the Scribes and Pharisees sat in Moses Seat*; and adds, *All therefore Mat. 23. 2. whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do, (i. e.*

all that they enjoin from the Law of *Moses*, all that they fairly urge from the Law of God; for otherwise our Lord could not have vindicated his Disciples in the 15th Chapter, as he did) but we deny the Power of a Convocation to make Laws for all worshipping Assemblies; and we find that the Conformists themselves, (as particularly the Bishop of *Sarum* †) give up the Divine Right of a Convocation; and yet farther than that can be pleaded; I don't see how we can be obliged by their Determinations.

† *Reflect. on a Book, Entituled, The Rights of a Convocation.*

Again, the Ceremony impos'd, was that which was indifferent to be sure in it self; nothing could be more so, than the washing the Hands before Meat; but we say that 'tis quite otherwise in some Matters in dispute between us: As particularly the Sign of the Cross.

2. We say that the Church of *Rome* is, and for several Ages has been, Idolatrous, and is certainly the most corrupt and impure Communion of any in the World. The Conformists have quarrell'd with us about several things, which we think unlawful, wherein we delir'd to be left to our Liberty, and which we can't devise what Reason they have to retain, unless it be a vain Humour of pleasing the Papists by some kind of Conformity to them. At this, we own, we are not a little surpriz'd, and think that a thing shou'd not be esteem'd the better for coming from them, but is rather to be look'd on as the more suspicious; and we think that the same Reason that induc'd our Reformers to lay aside so many Ceremonies, should have induc'd them to have laid aside the rest.

3. We think that all useless Monuments of Superstition and Idolatry should be abolish'd. We do not understand for what end these things, that do no good in the Worship of God, and that

have been abus'd to Superstition and Idolatry, should be retain'd ; and we think, that as *Rome* was not built in a Day, and Popish Superstitions and Idolatries did not come in all at once, but by little and little ; so the retaining of such things do's only leave open a Gap for their Return. We esteem that a noble Example that is set us in this Matter by *Hezekiah*, 2 *Kings* 18. 4. Who broke the Brazen Serpent in pieces (tho' it had been formerly useful, and were at first made by God's Command) when it was abused to Superstition and Idolatry.

We think that *Hezekiah's* Practice, and our own Opinion, are sufficiently vindicated by those Commands that God gave to the *Jews* to this Purpole, *Exod.* 23. 24. and 34. 13. *Numb.* 33. 52. *Deut.* 7. 5. and 12. 2, 3. and therefore if the Doctor would shew that the Dissenters are inconsistent in their Principles, he should shew that they retain some Popish useless Ceremonies, superstitiously us'd by them ; and till he does, all his hard Words will not hurt us. *Fancy, Humour, Perverseness, Interest, and such like unwarrantable Methods*, may happen to influence other Men in their Actions besides Dissenters. I could easily dilate upon those Words, if I thought them as much to the Purpose in a Controversie, as the Doctor seems to do. I will say this, That the Dissenters have appear'd as little byas'd by Interest, as any Men in this Nation ; and it is hard to say what temporal Interest such as the Doctor addresses his Letter to, can propose to themselves ; and they must be Men of a perverse Humour indeed, if they can fancy those meaner Circumstances they content themselves with, and all the Contempt and Scorn they are loaded with, or look upon these as eligible on their own Account.

His seventh Assertion is, *That it is unwarrantable for the Common Dissenters to be puff'd up for their Teachers against their Parish Ministers, or for the Dissenting Teachers to countenance and give way to their Followers, being thus puff'd up for them, and that so far as to cause, or at least help to promote and carry on an open Separation.* And this he argues from 1 *Cor.* 3. 4. and 18. 21. And that I may not lessen the Force of his Reasoning, he argues, If it was unwarrantable in the Case of real spiritual Gifts, and tho' it proceeded not to an open Separation, it is much more so, in the Case of the Dissenters, who do not excel the Churchmen in spiritual Gifts, and who are Separatists besides.

In answer to which I observe,

1. That if the Dissenters are Ministers of Christ, and the Doctor has as yet alledg'd nothing tolerable to prove the contrary, then this Consequence must fall heavily upon the Dr. and several of his Brethren, who are puff'd up with a Witness against Dissenters, and as much reproves those Churchmen that attend not on our Worship,

Worship, as it can those Dissenters who attend not upon the establish'd Worship. But the Dr. thinks he has a Right to insult us poor Animals, and even to deride our solemn Worship; for this is plainly his Design in talking of the *Artifice* and the *Knack of Ex-tempore* Prayer, &c. Upon which I will only put him in mind of the Words of the Reverend Arch-Bishop *Tilloison*, who thus animadvertes upon such a petulant Humour: "Tho' every Man has a Right in Dispute against a false Religion, to urge it with all its absurd and ridiculous Consequences, as the Ancient Fathers did in their Disputes with the Heathen; yet it is a barbarous Incivility for any Man scurrilously to make Sport with Religion, not with any Design to convince their Reason, but only to provoke their Rage.

Sermon on 2 Pet.

3. 3. *being the 2d*

in the Vol. in Fol.

P. 37.

2. The Doctor seems to think that 'tis impossible to prefer one Person before another, without being puff'd up for the first against the latter. Which I conceive is not true, nor can I doubt that a Man, without any Danger of that Crime, may prefer such a Person as I last cited, before the Doctor. It is no Crime to value the Person most that deserves best, provided that a Man does not despise others that are Persons of Merit, tho' inferiour to the former. This was the Fault the Apostle blam'd in the *Corinthians*, that their Respect was appropriated to some one particular Minister among them, so as to contemn the rest; and to be divided, tho' not into different Communions, yet into different Parties, headed each of them by some one of their Ministers. And the Dissenters own no such Head but Christ, and avow not any thing, because said by such a Man, or by such a Synod, but only as they see it to be the Mind of Christ; and if he thinks them thus consider'd to be a Party, he has his Liberty; others think their Principle is truly Catholick.

I shou'd be far from discouraging Persons Value of a Minister, of any Perswasion whatsoever, whose Doctrine was sound, and Conversation exemplary, tho' at the same time I can't but judge that those who think the Dissenters Cause right, and their Way of Worship most edifying, are bound stately to join with them.

3. The Doctor seems to lay a Stress, on the one Hand, upon the Conformists being the Parochial Ministers, and being the Parish's own Ministers; and on the other, upon our Separation.

In answer to the former we say, That in a Popish Country the Parochial Minister is the Schismatick, and the Protestant the Catholick. And 'tis not the Presentation of a Patron, or the Institution or Induction that the Bishop is forc'd to grant, that will give a Person a Right in our Esteem to be Minister of a Congregation, whither they will or no, or that will infer the Obligation of all that live in the Parish to submit to him.

Humane Laws may dispose of Humane Things ; the Parish-Church, the Living, &c. but neither does the Law of Christ, nor the Origin of Civil Government, shew, that every one is to refer himself in this Matter to the Magistrate. Nor can I see how a Man comes to be look'd upon as belonging to a particular Church, in which he never was baptiz'd, and of which perhaps he never did profess himself a Member.

As to his Argument on the other Hand, we deny that the blame of the Separation does at all belong to us. They have cast out our Ministers, not for refusing Obedience to any one Command and Institution of Christ, but only for refusing to obey some Commands of their own, which our Ministers think they cannot do consistently with that Obedience they owe to Christ.

And if the Non-conformist Ministers are in the right in their Non-conformity, they think that the People are bound to adhere to them, and not to those whose Conformity they can't but condemn, while perhaps they have an high Value for their Persons and Worth. The Doctor has not meddled here with the Merits of the Cause, and therefore neither shall I, who am only concern'd to enquire into the Strength of his Reasonings.

But, 4^{thly}, The Doctor do's most notoriously wrong us (if not his own Conscience) when he represents this as taught by the Dissenters, That praying without Form, or *Extempore*, and Preaching without-book, are true and certain Signs of being spiritually Gifted.

I am fully satisfied there is no Dissenting Minister in this Kingdom that teaches or believes such a thing. If the Doctor is dispos'd to consider seriously of this Matter, I would recommend a Discourse of Bp. Wilkins, concerning the Gift of Prayer, which, for ought I ever heard, the Dissenters are well-pleas'd with, and particularly what he says, Page the 3d, *That a Man may have the Gift of Prayer that has not the Spirit of Prayer* ; and as the Doctor's Conclusion is not deny'd, we are not concern'd in his Arguments.

His next Assertion is, *That to teach that the Observance of the Feasts or Festivals of our Church is sinful, popish, superstitious or unwarrantable, is the same in effect as to teach that it is sinful, popish, superstitious or unwarrantable, to humble our selves for our Sins, or to return Thanks to God on account of the most signal Circumstances whereby our Redemption was accomplish'd, &c. and consequently is the same as to teach erroneous or false Doctrine.*

And this the Doctor argues ; because this not only is, but is acknowledg'd by us to be our Duty. And here he alledges our observing the Fasts and Thanksgivings appointed during the War, and the 5th of November : And he thinks that upon the same Principle that we observe the one, we are bound to observe the other also.

also. Whether the Doctor's Consequence will hold, the Reader will be able to judge when he has heard what our Principle is.

1. The Dissenters think that God himself has appointed one Day weekly for the thankful Remembrance of his Mercies, wherein we are bound particularly to bless God for the Great Work of our Redemption by Christ, and for all that Christ has done and suffer'd for us, in order to the accomplishing of it; and therefore they think it needless for Men to appoint and impose other Days yearly for the same thing; and they desire here, that they that do so, would produce a fair Commission for their Proceedings.

2. They think they have good reason to believe that God did not intend we should observe any such religious Days as Men have appointed, because they find not that he has given us in his Word any Account of the Time when the Things themselves happen'd.

There are but four that we can fix to the exact Time and Day of the Year to which they belong, and they are *Good Friday, Easter-day, Holy Thursday* and *Whitsunday*; and our Knowledge of the precise time of them (they think) was not upon any such Account as this, but upon quite other Reasons; and that two of these happening always on a Lord's Day, they think them holy enough by virtue of God's Institution, and wonder why any Distinction should be set upon these, since every first Day of the Week is holy to the Lord by his own Appointment. But as to others they say, there is nothing that they can find that does persuade them that they happen'd on the Days appointed for the Commemoration of them. And farther they add, that the Arguments by which a great many of them are pretended to be fix'd, viz. that *Zacharias* was High-Priest, and the Time when he executed his Office was the Day of Atonement, *Luke* 1. 8. are demonstrably false; and that consequently these Holy-days are plac'd upon a Mistake in the Kalendar, viz. the Annunciation of *Mary*; the Nativity of *St. John Baptist*, *Christmas*, Circumcision, and the Purification of *Mary*; and that it is next to Demonstration that these Things all happen'd at other Times than those assign'd; as has been shewn

by a Learned Person of the Doctor's own *Whiston's Harmony*, Communion, referr'd to in the Margin: pag. 161, &c.

And therefore they do not understand how they can on *Christmas-Day*, and the Sunday after, say, with any tolerable Satisfaction, that *God gave his only begotten Son to take our Nature upon him, and as at this Time to be born of a pure Virgin*, when they see good Reason to believe that it was at quite another Season of the Year.

3. They don't like the Way in which this came into the Church. It is evident, that the Endeavour of accommodating the Christian

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Religion to the Heathen Customs, was very prejudicial to Christianity; and yet upon the Change of Religion in the Roman Empire, this seems to have been the very Foundation of the instituting these days, and therefore they plac'd them on such Days of the Year as were most superstitiously observ'd by the Gentiles, as

Page 162.

the same Person observes. Now tho' I don't think they design'd it, yet I think they did a considerable

Damage to our Holy Religion hereby. This Humour of adorning the Christian Religion with an Heathenish Dress, carried in it this Reflection, that Christianity seem'd to need such a Set-off. And therefore Mr. *Daille* conjectures, That it was this that occasion'd the Christians so early to add new Ceremonies to Baptism, to take off the Prejudice of the *Gentiles*, against the Simplicity of the Institution; whereas Christians should have esteem'd that its Beauty.

Inter Opera, in
Fol. p. 642.

I remember the Learned Mr. *Joseph Mede* in his excellent Treatise of the Apostacy of the Latter Times, gives us an Account of the Way in which the Doctrine of Devils (that is Saint-worship)

crept into the Christian Church; and he does it in the Words of *Theodoret*. I shall set down one Passage that he alledges out of him to this Purpose. *Theodoret* therefore thus bespeaks the Gentiles. *Our Lord God has brought his Dead, (viz. the Martyrs) into the Room and Place (the Temples) of your Gods, whom he hath sent packing, and has given their Honour to his Martyrs. For instead of the Feasts of Jupiter and Bacchus, are now celebrated the Festivals of Peter and Paul, and Thomas and Sergius, and other holy Martyrs.* And if their Original was a Mistake, and the Effect of them was mischievous, I hope the Doctor will not be angry with us for not observing them: Especially if we have the Primitive Christians on our side. The three first Ages before the Empire become Christian, were evidently in a great Measure so. I shall not collect Testimonies, as 'twere ealie to do. We appeal

Just. Martyr, *Apol.* 2.

Dial. p. 38, 47, 59.

to *Justin Martyr*, who speaks not of any other Day as Sacred but the Lord's Day; and who when *Tripbo* the Jew told him,

That they wonder'd at the Christians who pretended to Piety, that they neither observ'd Feasts nor Sabbaths; do's not answer him, That tho' they did not observe the Jewish Feasts, they had many of that kind the Doctor pleads for; but endeavours to shew that the Christians had Reason to observe the first (which he also calls the eighth) Day.

4. As to other Days mention'd by the Doctor, we think we have plain Evidence that the greatest Use that has been made of them, has been to revile and abuse us, and to exasperate the People against us, without any just Cause; and when we see Men

fast

fast for Strife and Debate, and to smite with the Fist of Wickedness, we desire to be excus'd from joining with *Iſa. 58. 4.* them.

5. We own that there may be beſide what is ordinary and common, ſome peculiar Reaſons and Occaſions for Prayer and Faſting, or for Praise and Thankſgiving upon a national Account: which as they do more immediately concern the Civil State, we think it very proper for a Prince to call his Subjects to them, and to appoint Days and Times for them: But then at the ſame time we don't lodge the matter wholly in him; for we think, if he ſhou'd neglect to appoint ſuch Days, the Church may lawfully do it itſelf; or if he ſhould appoint Days of another Nature, or upon an Account which they judge improper and unwarrantable, they are not bound to obſerve them.

The Caſe is much the ſame with that which beſel the Conſormiſts at a time within our Remembrance. They gave the Prince a great Liberty and Power in Matters of Religion, and had unmeaſurably exalted it to the Deſtruction of the Foundation of the Engliſh Conſtitution. At length a certain Prince try'd them, and required them to read a Declaration, which contain'd nothing in it ſelf unlawful, nay what they profeſs'd themſelves ready to agree to, and which contain'd nothing Contrary to that Sovereign Power of the King which they had preach'd up, and yet tho' they allow'd him a Power to appoint them to read Briefs, &c. in the Time of Worſhip, they refus'd to read this, and aſſum'd to themſelves that Judgment of Diſcretion which the Doctor condemns the Diſſenters very freely for.

The Doctor would intimate, *That we are at the Bottom more concern'd for Succeſs againſt the French King, than for the moſt ineſtimable Victory obtain'd by Chriſt over Sin, the Devil, and Death itſelf: and therefore notwithſtanding our outward Pretences, we are inwardly and at the Heart more Carnal and Worldly minded than others;* and the Doctor plainly infers it from our Practice. The Reader muſt neceſſarily ſee the Conſequence, that becauſe we bleſs God for the Victory obtain'd by Chriſt upon a ſolemn Day weekly; and we pray for Succeſs againſt the *French King* in the time of this War, upon a ſolemn Day appointed for that purpoſe once a Year, or once in 52 Weeks; therefore our Concern for Succeſs againſt the *French King*, is 52 times as great, as that for Chriſt's Victory. It would be as much a Banter upon the Reader in us, as 'tis in the Doctor, to argue upon this Matter. We openly avow our Principle, that as Chriſt has lodg'd the Care of his Publick Worſhip in the Governours of every particular Church, ſo it belongs to them to order it: and we are well ſatisfied that thoſe that condemn the Principle will aſſume a Power to act by it, whenever they

they find themselves to be generally pinch'd by denying it.

9. The Doctor's next Assertion is, *That every Christian of the Realm is most strictly oblig'd to observe the Rites and Ceremonies of our Church, tho' they be Humane Ordinances; therefore that whoever teaches the contrary, is a false Teacher.* And this he argues from Heb. 13. 17. because 'tis the Duty of every good Christian to obey the Rulers of the Church in all things not sinful. To which I answer,

1. That 'tis not true that every good Christian is obliged to obey the Rulers of the Church in all things not sinful, unless he means *by not sinful, not sinfully commanded by them, i. e.* whenever the Rulers of the Church command things which they have no Authority given them to enjoin, they sin by transgressing their Commission; and tho' the thing commanded by them were not in it self sinful, a Christian is not bound in Conscience to obey them. 'Tis their Commission from God is the Reason of the Obligation to Obedience, and certainly then the Christian's Obligation cannot be larger than their Commission, and the Reason of his Obligation.

2. The Rulers of the Church whom the Christian is bound to obey, are the Rulers of that particular Church to which he belongs; and as to others, no Obligation lies upon him to obey their Commands. Now here the Dissenters see not any Command that obliges them.

There are but two sorts of Churches mentioned in the New Testament (and to that Rule I resolve to keep till I can find a better) and they are the Catholick Church, and particular Churches, and these only can I look upon therefore as of Divine Institution; a National Church I find no mention of in the New Testament; and therefore the Authority of the pretended Rulers of such a Church I don't yet understand, but am ready to be inform'd of: as likewise what is the formal Reason of the Sin of Schism from a National Church, if it is not of Divine Institution. So that were it supposed true, that I were bound to obey the Rulers of the Church, in all things not sinful, yet this will not affect me, unless they are the Rulers of that particular Church of Divine Institution to which I belong. An Assembly of a different sort from that in which Christ has lodg'd the Power, if they meet together to make Laws, are a Confederacy and Combination, which I see no Reason I have to regard.

3. The Dissenters judge (as has been observ'd) some things impos'd to be sinful; and therefore according to the Doctor's own Hypothesis, are bound to disobey those Rulers he talks of. Particular Matters brought in by the Doctor under this Head, have received an Answer before.

10. His next Assertion is, *That whosoever shall teach that to shew Reverences to Churches (particularly by putting off the Hat) when we go into them, whether it be in or out of the time of Divine Service, is Superstitious and Popish, does give just Occasion to have himself censur'd as a false Teacher.*

The Doctor's Argument for this is, *Lev. 19. 30. and 16. 2. Ye shall keep my Sabbaths, and reverence my Sanctuary; I am the Lord:* Whence he argues, *That as the former Part requires due Regard to the Sabbath, or Day sanctified and set apart for Divine Worship, so the latter does as strictly require due Regard to the Sanctuary, or Place sanctify'd, (i. e. consecrated) or set apart to Divine Worship;* and therefore 'tis but reasonable to think the latter of perpetual Obligation as well as the former; with reference to which I say, I am very glad of such News from this Corner, I mean the perpetual Obligation of the Sabbath, which some of our Modern Zealots have been desirous to set upon a Level with their Holydays, and to lay all the Obligation to observe it upon the Command of the Church; which has look'd very much as tho' they would have their Power of instituting other Holydays stand or fall with the Observation of the Lord's Day. I am glad too that the Doctor seems so ready to digest that old Jewish Word *Sabbath*. The Use of it was formerly a Crime in the Dissenters, and reckon'd among the Instances of their Judaizing. If it will not put the Doctor by his good Disposition, I should say, Sabbaths comprehend there not only the weekly, but all other instituted Sabbaths, of which there was a great Number among the Jews. But let that pass.

The Question then is plainly, whether the other Part of the Precept is not of perpetual Obligation also. To which I answer, *That 'tis of as perpetual Obligation as the thing will bear; that is, that as long as God has such a worldly Sanctuary (as is there meant) 'tis to be reverenc'd.* The Reason why the Sanctuary was to be reverenc'd, was, because it was the Place where God himself did in an especial Manner dwell; and which he had by his own Institution appropriated to himself as holy. But when the Doctor argues at this rate, from the Jewish Sanctuary, thus hallowed by the Institution and Presence of God, to a Parish-Church consecrated by a Bishop, the Dissenters are not quick enough in their Reasonings to follow him. God has now no Worldly Sanctuary that we know of, nor do we see it prov'd that he has ty'd his Presence to any particular Place or Thing, but the Hearts and Assemblies of his People: and we think it not hard to conceive of this, tho' it should be deny'd that he constantly, and in a peculiar Manner, resides within the Walls of a Parish-Church; or tho' it should be deny'd that he does presently

dwell in every Place that the Bishop shall please to consecrate for that End, for we have no Promise of any such thing, and yet without that we cannot pretend to be assur'd of such a Matter. Now then to apply this Matter farther, if a Man go into a worshipping Assembly, there is good Reason for Reverence, because we know from God's Promise he is present there; but if he go into an empty Church, I can see no Foundation for a Religious Reverence; for if it be out of Respect to God's Presence that he pulls off his Hat in such a Place, he may as well in any other: for I can't from the Scripture see any Foundation for a Difference.

11. His last Instance is, *That he is a false Teacher, that teaches that 'tis not lawful for a Minister to receive Tythes, or take pay for Preaching, or that he is not a true Minister of the Gospel that does so receive Tythes or Pay.*

I suppose the Doctor had forgot his Title Page when he wrote this, and that he did not remember that Mr. Dowley was a Dissenting Teacher of the Presbyterian or Independant Perswasion; he certainly took him now for a Quaker: Such are I think the only People that at this day deny the Lawfulness of a Minister's taking Pay; or that judge of Ministers after this Rate. Does not the Doctor know that the Dissenting Ministers live upon the voluntary Contributions of their People? Does he not know that the Government oftentimes taxes them accordingly, and that by paying those Taxes, they have publicly own'd that they do receive Pay? I suppose that the Doctor here had not his Eye upon any Divine Right that Gospel-Ministers have to Tithes, that's quite another Question, which his Arguments do not at all meddle with.

And thus I have consider'd the Doctor's first Head of Accusations, and can safely refer the Matter to any candid and impartial Reader, whether they amount to any thing or no, or whether the Doctor did not in the Beginning endeavour to raise such Expectations by his Discourse, as he was no ways able to answer and satisfy.

Let us next consider, whether he has any thing better to offer under his other Head of Accusations against us, and that is Falseness of Mission; and here he tells us, *That he will set down what is most proper to convince us, that our Ministers have not a true Mission, or, (which is the same) that (which is now-a-days call'd) a Presbyterian Ordination, is not valid or sufficient to authorize the Person so ordain'd, to teach or to perform any other Part of the Ministerial Office.*

Before the Reader proceeds, let him observe that which the Dissenters are well-pleas'd to see, that their Cause must stand and fall with that of all the Protestant Churches; and that the Doctor's

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Aim is not against the Dissenters only, but that if he proves his Point, all foreign Protestants are a Parcel of poor, untaught, unbaptiz'd Heathens.

The Doctor then proceeds to lay open the true State of the Question: He tells us, *That the Controversy was occasion'd at the time of the Reformation by some then call'd Presbyters, who took upon them to give Ordination to others; and therefore he tells us, that the Controversie depends upon the State of the Ministerial Office at that time; and in what Sense the Word Presbyters was then taken, and with what Ministerial Power such were invested by the Ordination they had themselves received.* He tells us, *That we own that for several 100 Years before the Reformation, Bishops, superiour to Presbyters, were invested with the Power of Ordination, and Presbyters were not* (he should have said were suppos'd not to be so invested) and therefore he puts this for the true State of the Question: *Whether a Person in Holy Orders, tho' never invested himself with the Power of Ordination, can nevertheless be truly said to have the just Power of Ordination (or which comes to the same) can nevertheless duly and rightly take upon him to give Ordination to others?* and then he thinks he may easily determine, That since no Person can duly act beyond the Commission he receives, or beyond that Degree of Authority wherewith he has been invested; therefore such Presbyters as are mention'd before could not duly ordain, as not invested with the Power of Ordination.

Thus I have given the Doctor's Reason in Sum, not leaving out any thing of the Strength thereof that I know of. In answer to it I say, 1. That 'tis a Weakness for a Man to argue at this rate, to wave the Consideration of the Holy Scriptures. The Doctor can't but know that that is the only Rule to Protestants, and the Dissenters will not hearken to any other; and therefore his pretending to state the Controversie by the common Sentiments of Men, and not by the holy Scriptures, is a way that may satisfy him, but never will us. For the Question is not what Men have thought, but whether their Thoughts were consonant to our only Rule, and if they were not, they can be of no Importance in the Controversie, because then they must be corrected by the Scriptures; and therefore,

2. I ask the Doctor this plain Question: Were Presbyters at the time that he talks of Officers of Divine Appointment, or were they not? If they were not, they are to be discarded, and the Doctor has given up the Cause of the threefold Order, and in course should lose his Benefice. If they were of Divine Institution; then we must by that Institution alledge what their Office and Power is, and not by the corrupt Notions of Men in after-Ages.

3. If we are to argue after this rate from the Sense of those

times, the Argument will wound the Episcopal as well as Presbyterian Ordination : For if therefore a Presbyter at the time of the Reformation could not have the Power of Ordination, because in those times he was not look'd upon to have it, and his Ordainers did not design to give it; the same will hold against the Bishops; that if then, and for several Ages before, they were look'd upon as the Pope's Creatures, and swore Subjection to him at their Ordination, and their Ordainers never design'd to give them a Power to ordain independently on the Pope, they could not then rightfully so ordain, and by consequence all Protestant, even Episcopal Ordinations are thus invalid.

4. With reference to the Dissenters, the Presbyters who first ordain'd among them were themselves (generally at least) Episcopally ordain'd; and therefore if we are to judge by the Sentiments of the Ordainers, the Dissenters will come off very easily; because 'tis certain our Protestant Bishops, at the time of the Reformation, did look upon the Offices of Bishops and Presbyters to be the same by Divine Right, as is plain from an Original of those times, a Copy of which Bp. *Burnet* has given us in his History of the Reformation, who apologizes for their Notion, and calls it (to the best of my Remembrance) the Dregs of Popery.

But this has been taken notice of by so many, that I need not add more about it. And this Notion was very prevailing, till Arch-Bishop *Laud* carry'd the matter to that height, that is at present so earnestly pleaded for : Tho' even in his time there were some Bishops otherwise minded. I remember Mr. *Firmin*, in a Piece about Imposition of Hands, tells us of a Bishop then that declar'd, when he ordain'd a Person a Presbyter; he did it not himself as a Bishop, but as a Presbyter; and he gives such an Account of the Matter, that by what he says, it may be easily known who the Bishop was, tho' he does not mention his Name. So that these Bishops who were of this Opinion, are reasonably to be suppos'd to design to give to Presbyters as much as we desire.

Now he is so kind as to come to the Scripture, which is the Weapon we desire may be us'd in this Controversie.

Now here I desire the Reader to observe how he argues with us out of the Scripture; for his pretending to come now to that is but a Blind, for he drops it before he gets to the end of his Argument. Thus he reasons; *As St. Paul argues, how can they preach except they be sent? So is it to be argued in the Case, how can they ordain, except they be sent; namely, to Ordain?* This is own'd, that no Person can have a Right to Ordain, but those that are sent, that are authoriz'd by God to Ordain. Now the Reader would perhaps expect some solid Scripture-Proof, that God has not sent

or authoriz'd Presbyters to ordain, but he is like to meet with nothing like it. But let us see how the Doctor argues. And he says, *That while we go about to justify the Validity of Presbyterian Ordination, by shewing that Presbyters in the New Testament were invested with Apostolical Authority, as to the Permanent or standing Parts of the Apostolical Office, and consequently were invested with the Power of Ordination, we implicitly grant the main Point, That no one can duly and rightfully ordain without being himself first duly invested with the Apostolical Power of Ordination, and so far (says he) you are in the Right.*

I shall only observe that we don't pretend to Apostolical Authority, speaking properly. The Apostles (we say) were to be look'd upon in a double Capacity; that of Apostles, and so neither had nor could have any to succeed them: Their other Capacity was that of ordinary Rulers, and so they were Presbyters, and succeeded by such. If he means by Apostolical Authority, only that Authority which belongs to those whom Christ has entrusted with the Government of his Church (whoever they found to be) we then own it, and say that every Presbyter is so invested, and we do not only implicitly, but expressly grant his main Point, as he calls it, that none can lawfully Ordain (I am not concern'd in Cases of utmost Necessity) except those that are invested with the Power of Ordination: and now let the Doctor make the best of it. He tells us, that so far we are in the Right, *But then your unhappy Error (says he) lies here, that you seem not thoroughly to understand, or to be sufficiently aware (of the promiscuous, and consequently ambiguous use of the Word Presbyter, whence it comes to pass) that tho' it be certainly true, that such as are invested with the full Extent of the standing Apostolical Power, are invested with the Power of Ordination; and tho' it should be true, that those call'd Presbyters in the New Testament were thus invested with the full Extent of the standing Apostolical Power, yet both these do not avail you any thing toward the Justification of your Case.* That's a little strange, I confess, one would think, that if Presbyters have a Right by the New Testament, they can't lose it at Mens Pleasure, and the taking it away should look like a kind of Sacrilege. But before we consider his Reason, we must take notice of his Parenthesis, and let him know that we deny that Promiscuous and Ambiguous Use of the word *Presbyter*, when it is taken for an Office, and he has not yet prov'd it: But now hear his Reason; *Forasmuch as what has been ever since the Reformation call'd Presbyterian Ordination, was at first brought up, and has been ever since continu'd by such Presbyters as were never themselves invested with the Apostolical Power of Ordination, and consequently such an Ordination is not a true and valid Ordination.* This is his Scripture-Proof, without one Word of Scripture in it; but the same Argument that

he us'd before he came to his Scripture-Proof, is trump'd up again; and the Sum of the Matter is this, that let the Scripture say what it will of the *Presbyters* Right, yet since Men in after-Ages grew wiser, and were pleas'd to deny its belonging to them, therefore it do's not. The Doctor must learn to manage a Scripture-Argument better, or he is like to work very little upon the Dissenters. The Argument has been consider'd before.

Next he proceeds to answer O U R Arguments from the Scripture; Tho' I must say, if they were no better than his own, he might save himself the Labour.

Before I proceed to consider his Answers, I will mention to him two more Scripture-Arguments, which he has not taken notice of, and upon which I confess I lay a considerable Stress: And they are,

1. That as we read not of the Institution of more than two sorts of fixed Officers in the Christian Church, so 'tis reasonable to suppose there was no more; for certainly since there is neither a distinct Institution of the 3d Order, nor a distinct Name for it, it is unreasonable to believe the pretended Office it self to be distinct. We have the Institution of Bishops or Presbyters in the Apostles, and of Deacons afterwards; but where shall we look for the 3d?

2. Our other Argument is taken from *Acts* 20. 28. from which we argue, not only from the not distinguishing the words Presbyters and Bishops (those that were call'd the Elders of the Church, v. 17. being call'd the Bishops, v. 28. *over which the Holy Ghost has made you Bishops*) but especially we argue from the Apostle's speaking of them as the Rulers of the Church, and committing the Government of the Church to them: which shews plainly that the Church of *Ephesus* was not under the Government of one single Person (or Bishop) but a Plurality, Cod. Can. Eccles. or Presbytery; and this, as Bp. *Beveridge* Primit. illustr. 1.2. says, is the true State of the Controversie, cap. 11. de Episc. whether the Church is to be Govern'd by one or more.

Now let us hear the Doctor.

1. He considers our Argument from *Phil.* 1. 1. *To all the Saints in Christ Jesus, which are at Philippi, with the Bishops and Deacons.* From which we argue, that there were but two sorts of Officers in that Church, and that it was govern'd not by a single Bishop.

Now here the Doctor answers, *That 'tis not said the Bishops OF Philippi, but AT Philippi; and that none can deny that tho' there could be regularly but one Bishop of Philippi, there might be more at it, when this Letter was written, or at least to be deliver'd.*

He appeals, *Whether a Letter now (in time of Parliament) might not*

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not be directed to the Bishops at London and Westminster, tho' there be but one Bishop of London and none of Westminster.

To which we answer;

1. That the Epistle is written to a Church, as all St Paul's Epistles are (excepting those to particular Persons) and therefore when he says to the Saints that are at *Philippi*, he is to be understood of the Saints that dwell there, and constituted that Church; and the Words at *Philippi*, strictly belong to the Saints; and when he adds with the Bishop and Deacons, he plainly therefore intends those that did belong to these Saints, or that Church; and indeed if the Doctor's Answer were good, the Words at *Philippi* should be put last of all.

2. The Doctor's Supposition is precarious, that there were Bishops of other Churches there when this Epistle was written, or was to be deliver'd, and the only Ground of it is to serve an Hypothesis. The Apostle wrote from *Rome*, that was sufficiently distant from *Philippi*, and what Reason can we have to think, that at the time of his writing he knew that there were other Bishops at *Philippi*, since it was not then usual for them to be Non-Residents? If there were any when *Epaphroditus* left them to go to *Rome*, had not the Apostle Reason to think that they were gone home to their respective Churches; before he could be able to reach to his Journeys end? Farther, there is no reason to believe that this Epistle was to be deliver'd to an Assembly of Bishops call'd together at *Philippi*, because there is no Intimation in the Epistle it self concerning any such thing, or any occasion for it. Which makes the Case widely different from that which the Doctor puts, of our Bishops being at *London* to attend in Parliament.

3. Those to whom he writes were *Philippians*, which I argue not from the Title only, because the Authority of that may be justly disputed; but *Chap. 4. 15.* where he thus bespeaks those to whom he writes. *Now ye Philippians known also, &c.* and if I should put the Instance that the Doctor does, I appeal to him, whether in an Epistle directed to the Bishops at *London*, it would be proper to say to them, *Ye Londoners.*

4. If the Doctor's Interpretation be true, then the middle Order is wholly left out, and the Apostle must be suppos'd to pass them by without any Notice or Salutation, while he yet particularly mentions the inferiour Order of Deacons.

And I ask the Doctor, whether if a Man wrote to the Convocation, and should direct it only to the Bishops and Proctors, assembled, &c. the Deans and Archdeacons would reckon themselves civilly and handsomely dealt with?

I desire the Reader to observe, whether our easie and natural In-

Interpretation, does not make this Text better agree with the next, than his precarious and strain'd one will do.

(2.) The next Text the Doctor pretends to answer is, 1 *Tim.* 3. where the Apostle only gives Rules concerning Bishops and Deacons, and none concerning Presbyters. And here the Doctor desires it may be consider'd, why Presbyters may not be meant by Deacons, since the Word signifies Ministers. I own that the Word *Διακον* does primarily signify a Minister, or Servant; and therefore is us'd in a great Latitude. But yet there can be no such Reason for the Doctor's, as for the ordinary Interpretation, for these two Reasons.

1. That we have an Account of the Institution of those Officers that we judge denoted hereby, and the Doctor has none at all of those he wou'd pretend; this is what we mainly insist on; and till this is clear'd, such Suppositions are to be look'd upon as wild and precarious.

2. As the word *Διακονοι* signifies undoubtedly Officers in the Christian Church, so there is very good Reason to understand thereby this particular sort of Officers. The Name, when appropriated to Officers in the Christian Church, does fully agree with the Business, and the first Occasion of those whom we understand by it. They were ordain'd to perform according to the Direction of the Apostles, those inferiour Offices, which could not be conveniently attended to by the Apostles themselves, and so the Name of Deacons, Ministers or Servants, did very well agree to them. Besides, that the chief Part of their Business, and that for which their Office was especially instituted, was to take care of the Poor, and to distribute the Churches Charity among them; and as this was call'd by the Name of *Διακονία*, or however with the Addition of *καθημερινή*, and they were set over this Business, it seems that hence came the name of *Διακονοι* to be us'd to signify such Officers.

And tho' we do not make any thing to be our Rule but the Scriptures, yet where that appears so clear, we think the Testimonies of such Antient Authors, as *Clemens Romanus*, and *Polycarp*, are not inconsiderable, whom the Doctor may compare together, for the clearing this matter; to whom I am free that he should add *Ignatius* also.

The Doctor adds; 1. *That nothing is contain'd in these Rules concerning those stil'd Deacons, that is not applicable to Presbyters.* To which I answer, That that is not sufficient; because according to his own Rule, p. 29. the superiour Order includes all its relative inferior Orders, and so the Qualifications requir'd (say I) in the inferior, are much more necessary in the superior. But then there is another way of arguing, and that is this; If there be
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somewhat wanting in those Rules concerning Deacons, which may be suppos'd necessary to be given concerning Presbyters, this will be a good Evidence on our side without the other ; and such I reckon is that, that a Presbyter should *be apt to teach* ; this I find not among those of Deacons, and therefore can't allow the Doctor's Interpretation.

2. *He desires us to produce some Instance where the words Deacons and Presbyters are mentioned together, or by way of Distinction.* To which I answer ;

(1.) Let the Doctor do the like by the Words Bishop and Presbyter, which must be as much incumbent on him.

(2.) We say we do that which is tantamount ; for we shew the distinct Institution of each, and we shew that Bishop and Presbyter are the same in the Stile of the Scripture ; and therefore when we produce the Bishops and Deacons mention'd together, and by way of Distinction, this is equivalent to what he calls for.

2. *He says there is no Reason in Scripture why the word Deacons, either 1 Tim. 3. 8. or Phil. 1. 1. should be understood of Deacons properly so called ;* but that I have answered already.

I cannot but here take notice to the Reader of an Observation that I have made, that when the Conformists would answer our Arguments, and account for the Texts which we alledge, they run into almost as many different Ways as there are Writers in the Controversy, which, as it is very common where Men leave the easy and natural Sense of a Text, and are forcing out another, is no small Confirmation to me of our Interpretations. They can't rest satisfied in one anothers particular Explications, and yet they expect that we must hold the Point they would secure by them. But to proceed.

(3.) Another Passage he pretends to answer is, *Th. 1. 5, 7.* where our Argument is this ; *Titus was left in Crete to ordain Elders or Presbyters in every City* ; these Presbyters the Apostle says must be *blameless*, &c. and the Reason that he gives is this, *For a Bishop must be blameless*, where we say that it is plain that the Bishop cannot be of a superiour Order : For then the Apostle's Argument would not be valid ; but to borrow a Similitude of the Doctor's, it would be as though a Man should argue, that a Bachelor in any Faculty must be so and so qualified, because a Doctor must ; and therefore we say, 'tis hence evident the Scripture does not distinguish a Bishop and Presbyter, and that as yet the Conformists have not found there either the Institution or Name of the Office that they argue for.

Now how does the Doctor answer ? *Why ! He allows the promiscuous Use of the Word Bishop, but says this does not prove that the Power of Ordination does belong to Presbyters, or such as in the two forementioned*

Places are filled Bishops. This, it must be own'd, is strange Doctrine. Does not the Apostle in the Epistle to *Timothy*, speak of Bishops as having the Care of the Church of God.

He gives this therefore as a necessary Qualification of a Bishop, *That he be one that ruleth well his own House*: And his Reason is, For if a Man know not how to rule his own House, how shall he take Care of the Church of God. Upon which Words Dr. *Hammond* gives us this Paraphrase; "For sure he that cannot rule a so much less Province, will be unfit to be a Governor of the Church of God. Now I think it is not deny'd, that the Power of Government and Ordination go together, and that this latter is contain'd in the former, as a Part of the due ordering and governing of the Church. Again in *Titus*, a Bishop is requir'd to be blameless as the Steward of God, which Doctor *Hammond* thus paraphrases; "As becomes one that has the Government of God's Family intrusted to him. And I think the Doctor has good Reason for his Paraphrase. For the Use of a Steward was to rule the House, and with the Care of it was he intrusted. Compare *Gen.* 15. 2. and 24. 2. and especially read *Luke* 20. 42. And the Lord said, who is that faithful and wise Steward, whom his Lord shall make (i. e. hath made; compare *Mat.* 24. 45. or else who is qualified to be made) Ruler over his Household, to give them their Portion of Meat in due Season.

Iren. lib. 4. c. 44. Which some perhaps could be ready to think belongs to this very Matter, but I only alledge it to clear the Notion of a Steward; and add further, that hence it is that the Governours of the Church are call'd Stewards, *1 Cor.* 4. 1, 2. and therefore I cannot but subscribe to Dr. *Hammond's* Paraphrase.

But the Doctor goes on, *Nay, in Titus there are some Particulars which afford very good Grounds for inferring that the Power of Ordination did not belong to such an one as is there, ver. 7. filled a Bishop.* His Argument is (*ad hominem*) thus; That since from the Apostle's only mentioning Bishops and Deacons, *Phil.* 1. 1. and *1 Tim.* 3. we argue that Presbyters must be meant by Bishops, so in like manner, since it is not probable that *Titus* was to ordain only Elders, and no Deacons, and by Consequence it is not probable that *St. Paul* should here design to give *Titus* Rules only concerning Elders, and not also concerning Deacons, it is but rational to suppose, that under the general Word Bishop, *ver.* 7. are to be comprehended Deacons as well as Presbyters; especially seeing there is nothing in the literal Signification of the Words *ἐπίσκοπος* and *διάκονος*, which hinders their being used of the same Persons.

To which I say, 1. That a sufficient Answer has been given to

to this already, and we have given Evidence that this can't be understood of Deacons, because the Government of the Church is lodg'd in them: And to that I add, *ver. 9.* where the Apostle requires an Ability by sound Doctrine, to *exhort and to convince Gainfayers*, which answers to that, *1 Tim. 3. 2. Hpt to teach*. Now since this is not mention'd by the Apostle as a Qualification necessary for a Deacon, but for a Bishop, *1 Tim. 3. 10.* And since this is here made the Qualification of an Elder or Bishop in *Titus*, there can be no Reason (except the serving an Hypothesis) that should persuade us, that by an Elder or a Bishop in *Titus*, is meant a Deacon, or that he is to be included.

2. As to the Doctor's Observation of the Signification of the words *ἐπίσκοπος* & *διάκονος*, we own that they may be apply'd to the same Persons, so as that he who is *ἐπίσκοπος* may be styled *διάκονος*, a Servant or Minister of Christ; but then the Word is manifestly us'd according to its common Signification and Latitude, and not for any particular kind of Officer in the Christian Church. But we very much question whether the Doctor will be able to prove, that they might both be apply'd to a Person that was only a Deacon, or that *ἐπίσκοπος* is ever us'd in that Latitude; and yet without this, his Observation will not help him.

3. It may be alledg'd, that Deacons, though an useful Institution, yet were not absolutely necessary to the Being of a Church, and therefore the Apostle might not mention his ordaining of them. Bishops were absolutely necessary, and as these would have a Power themselves to ordain Deacons, when they had Occasion, he might not expect that *Titus* should ordain Deacons, and especially since he had a great deal of necessary Work to do, to go over every City in *Crete*, and to ordain Elders in each, and he had but a little while to stay to do it in: For that he was to return soon to *St. Paul*, is evident from *Tit. 3. 12.* and therefore if he did not expect him to ordain Deacons, the mentioning the Qualifications of them was not so necessary.

4. The next Text he pretends to answer is, *1 Pet. 5. 1. The Elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an Elder, (id which may be added 2 John 1. and 3 John 1.) Hence say your Writers, it appears that the Apostles were Presbyters. Ay, certainly, and who ever deny'd it?* Then so far we are all well enough, but then see what Terms he puts upon us. But (says he) doth it hence appear (what ought to be proved by your Writers, if they would prove any thing to the purpose) that the Apostles were only or no other than Presbyters, or (which comes to the same) that every Presbyter is an Apostle? If we are requir'd to dispute upon such Terms as these, I can have no Prospect of any End of the Controversie. Must we prove the Apostles were only Presbyters, when we own they were more?

We say their Apostleship was chat wherein they differ'd from Presbyters; and would he have us prove, that tho' there was a Difference, yet they were exactly the same? Is he not an unreasonable Man, that would put us upon proving that every Presbyter is an Apostle; when we deny that any Person whatever, since the Apostles Days, was, or can be an Apostle?

If the Doctor thinks he can prove our Modern Bishops Apostles, we will prepare to hear him; but his naked Assertion, that the Apostolical Order is the same with the Episcopal, avails very little. We understand his Comparisons well enough, but he should first prove his Point, and then his Illustration will be pertinent. In short, we say that the Apostles, consider'd in their extraordinary Capacity, were Apostles, and neither had nor could have any Successors: In their ordinary Capacity, they are succeeded by all those that have the Government of the Church lodg'd in them: and as there was but one Sort of Apostles, so we can see no reason to make more than one Sort of Governours, and desire those who would split their Office (in their ordinary Capacity) into two distinct Offices, (*viz.*) of the Bishops and Presbyters, to give us better Reasons for it than we can yet meet with; and therefore if there is but one sort of Successors of the Apostles, we are very easy, and think the Texts he speaks to are too clear to be darken'd by the Mist he would cast before the Reader's Eyes. Besides, the Observation that we made in speaking to the other Text, is here to be made also, *viz.* that those Elders were Rulers of the Church, 1 Pet. 5. 2.

5. The last Text is, 1 Tim. 4. 14. *With the laying on of the Hands of the Presbytery.* Now (says he) the Argument drawn from hence by your Writers, namely, that the Presbytery have the Power of laying on of Hands, or of Ordination, may be very well answer'd from what has been already said concerning the Word Presbyter, being promiscuously apply'd to the Apostles. For hence it will follow, that by the laying on the Hands of the Presbytery here mentioned, may very well be understood the laying on of the Hands of no other than the Apostles. Should even this be allow'd, it would signifie nothing to the Doctor's Purpose. For if they laid on Hands as Apostles, and had no Successors in their Apostleship, then there has been no Power of Ordination since their time. If they did not ordain as Apostles, but as Presbyters or Bishops (for the Doctor has not yet help'd us to the Distinction, unless his Word may pass for a sufficient Warrant) then all such who succeed them in their Office, must have the Power of Ordination. But (says the Doctor) that hereby is meant the laying on of the Hands (at least) of the Apostle St. Paul, is evident from 2 Tim. 1. 6. where the same Ordination that is in the fore-cited Place attributed to the Presbytery, is expressly attributed to St. Paul himself. The Doctor lays this down as absolutely certain, and speaks of it with

with an Air that would perswade a Person that never look'd into these things before, that there was no Objection against it; but one would think he should know, there are some who make the laying on of Hands in these two places cited, two distinct and different things, the one for the giving of the Holy Ghost, which the Apostle might well attribute to himself, it being one of the Peculiarities of the Apostleship. And the other they think was in Ordination by the Presbytery. This Objection was certainly worthy the Doctor's notice, and he will do well to remove it clearly out of his way. But now mark his Inference. *Whence it will necessarily follow, that tho' the Presbytery mention'd did join with St. Paul in the Ordination of Timothy, yet they did only join with him.* (Ay certainly they did no more, and so St. Paul did only join with them, for they both join'd together) *and that therefore from thence it can never be prov'd that the Power of Ordination did belong to the Presbytery it self there mention'd.* But we ask'd if the Presbytery did ordain, did they it as Persons that had Power, or that had not? and if they had not, what did their Act signify?

Now he subjoins two Considerations, which (he says) tend clearly to evince, that the Power of Ordination did not belong to Presbyters, properly so call'd in the New Testament. I wish the Doctor had set down those places in the New Testament refer'd to.

1. His first is grounded on *Tit. 1. 5.* the Sum of it is this: If the Presbyters ordain'd by *Titus*, were such as had themselves the Power of Ordaining, what need *Titus* have been left at *Crete* to ordain them Elders in every City? If he had ordain'd such in one or two of the first Cities he came at, they might have ordain'd others.

In answer to which I say,

1. We have shewn before, that they had the Power of Ordination, because they had that of Government; one such Positive Argument is worth forty of the Doctor's Negative Ones.

2. There is a very propable Reason why *Titus* was left, even supposing these Presbyters to have the Power, *viz.* because they were to be fix'd and abide in their Cures, and tho' design'd to have all the Power necessary in their Stations, yet they were not to be employ'd as Itinerants and Evangelists, in founding and settling Churches: besides there was a peculiar Reason for their not leaving their Flocks immediately upon their Ordination, before they had gain'd their Affections. And I suppose the Doctor will allow, that tho' all Presbyters are equal with respect to their Office, yet some by reason of their Age, Standing and Experience, may be more proper to be employ'd in any Work of Moment and Difficulty than others; and this alone might be a Reason why *Titus* was order'd thus to go over the Cities of *Crete*.

3. If

3. If *Titus* was not to ordain those that had themselves the Power of Ordination; then I ask the Doctor, (1.) What was to become of them afterwards, when he should be remov'd from them, as he was to be soon (as I shall have occasion to observe afterward) or in Case of *Titus's* Death, and the Death of some of their Elders? Do's the Doctor think that the Apostles, when they founded and settled Churches, did not take care to settle them so, as they might be able to preserve Order among themselves? Or do's he think that in such a Place as *Crete*, he design'd there should be none empower'd to ordain, or none but *Titus*? (2.) I ask him what becomes of the old Opinion of the Conformists, that every City should have its own Bishop, if this be true?

2. His other Consideration is this, *That since there are to be found no Rules of Ordination (in any of the other Epistles, tho' more in number) but only in the Epistles to Timothy and Titus, who as single Persons presided over, and govern'd the Churches of Ephesus and Crete. Hence it may be rationally inferr'd, That the Doctrine of the Church of England, concerning the Power of Ordination, belonging (not to a Community of Presbyters, but) to single Persons, by us call'd Bishops, is agreeable to the Direction and Practice of the Great Apostle St. Paul, and consequently of Apostolical Constitution.*

In answer to which, I ask what the Doctor means by presided over, or govern'd as single Persons? Do's he mean they did for a little time, while they remain'd there, direct them in Church Affairs, and ordain them Officers? This is too little. The Doctor would hardly say, that the Bishop of another Diocess ordaining a Person in *London*, presided over, and govern'd the Church at *London*, even tho' the Person ordain'd had a *London* Title. I take it therefore for granted, That the Doctor means, that (according as we speak now) they were the Bishops of *Ephesus* and *Crete*, or the fix'd and sole Governours thereof, each in his respective Church. Now this is easily said, but very hardly prov'd, and therefore the Doctor chose the quickest and easiest way, to take it for granted. There is no Evidence of this from the Scripture. The Postscript to the Epistles are neither Canonical nor Antient, and the very Style of that to *Titus*, when it talks of the Church of the *Creteans*, is quite different from that of the New Testament, which never speaks of the Christians of a whole Country, under the Name of a Church in the singular Number; and since there is no Evidence to the contrary, we have as much Right upon our single Word to deny, as the Doctor has upon his to assert, that they were Bishops of these Churches.

But we do not insist upon that, but add,

1. That if *Timothy* were, according to the Postscript, the first Bishop of *Ephesus*, the Apostle would not have committed the Government

verment of the Church to the Elders, as he did, and that when *Timothy* was by; compare the 4th, 17th, and 28th Verses of the 20th of the *Acts*.

2. If *Timothy* had been the Bishop of *Ephesus*, his Duty would have been to reside there, and then it is not probable that the Apostle would (at the same time mention'd before: Compare 1 *Tim.* 1. 3. with *Acts* 20. 1.) have besought, but rather enjoin'd him to abide still at *Ephesus*. Nor is it probable that he would have afterwards call'd him from his Cure, as he did, 2 *Tim.* 4. 21.

And the like may be said with reference to *Titus*, That had he been, according to the Modern way of speaking, the Bishop of *Crete*, it is not likely that the Apostle would have so soon call'd him away as he did, *Tit.* 3. 12. or that he would afterwards have sent him another way to *Dalmatia*, 2 *Tim.* 4. 10. And I think the Apostle speaks not as tho' he design'd to settle *Titus* Bishop of *Crete*, when he says, *That for this Cause left I thee in Crete, that thou mightest set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain Elders in every City.* This looks as tho' he were left only upon a particular Exigence, and was to stay there no longer than till he had taken care of it.

3. There is no reason to think that *Timothy* or *Titus* were to ordain alone. *Timothy* had the Elders or Bishops of *Ephesus*, mention'd in the 20th of the *Acts*, with him, and *Titus* had *Zenas* and *Apollos*; and tho' the Charge is given to *Timothy* and *Titus*, as they were to be the Principle and Leading Persons; yet since by comparing other Places we find that Ordinations were perform'd by a Plurality, and especially since Christ did not appoint his Apostles to act singly, but in Conjunction, it is but reasonable to think that *Timothy* and *Titus* acted in like manner.

One Objection more the Doctor answers, and is free upon the matter in his Reproaches, &c. which, as we are pretty well us'd to, we have learn'd to despise.

The Objection is this, *That Episcopal Government, as maintain'd by the Church of England, is only an effect of humane Pride and Ambition, and no other than a piece of Popery.* I will not set down the Doctor's Answer at length, but will give the Reader my own Sentiments about the Objection, and his Answer in these following things.

1. Then I do not think that all Episcopacy is either Popish or Unscriptural. There is an Episcopacy that I am ready to plead for, and I have some Design to do so; and I verily believe, That neither those call'd *English-Presbyterians*, nor *Independents*, will be against a Precedency of one before the rest, of the same Order, in a particular Church.

2. 'Tis the Difference or Superiority of the Order of Bishops that I deny to be founded upon Scripture; and the Doctor is so favourable as to say as little as I could desire to confute my Opinion; or, if he please, to take the Question according to Bp. Beveridge's stating it: I deny that the Government appointed by Christ, or his Apostles in every Church, is Monarchical. And here both Presbyterians and Independents also, however the Doctor represents and insults them, join with me. For the Independents give the People so much Power, as that the Pastor cannot act against the Vote of the Majority of the People, and therefore is far from being *acknowledg'd Lord Paramount*.

3. That so long as I am convinc'd that the Episcopacy I plead against is not according to Scripture, I am not much concern'd which way it came in, tho' the Doctor's way of Reasoning do's not much move me: For tho' the Danger of the most eminent Station in the Church, might deter Persons from affecting it in times of Persecution, yet that does not hinder the Workings of a natural Inclination in Men to grasp at Power, (which has a Spice of Pride and Ambition in it) when they are actually got into such a Station. Suppose Men were afraid of being Bishops, could there be no Temptations to them to enlarge their own Power when they were so? I desire the Doctor to consider whether he can find nothing of this Nature in Pope *Victor* and *Stephanus*, or whether the Respite they sometimes had, might not let loose a Passion, which Persecution perhaps chain'd up; or whether, notwithstanding his Argument, he has not heard of one *Diotrephes*, who lov'd to have the Pre-eminence; or of *Novatian*, that got himself to be made a Bishop, and who had many Bishops of his own Way that succeeded him.

4. I make no doubt but that as he that had the Precedency in any Church, was ordinarily a Person of most Eminence and Worth; so this, and his having the chief Hand in managing Affairs, gave him Advantage to enlarge his own Authority; and I think the farther we come from Scripture-Times, the more we may observe that Enlargement.

5. I cannot but think that the vast Extent of Diöceses made the lowest Species of Churches, with the Bishop at the Head of them, as sole Pastor of all Christians therein, is contrary to Scripture, Antiquity, and Reason it self. Let the Doctor call it what he will, I ask him, Whether he can blame a Man for saying the Pope is capable of being Universal Pastor; and yet say himself, That a Man may be capable of the pastoral Care of a Million of Souls in *England*, and of a great many Thousands besides in several Places of *America*?

6. I delight not in reproachful Speeches, and therefore should

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not much affect Charges of Popery; but only I will tell the Doctor, that he would have done his Cause more Service, by shewing plainly that Bishops, with such Diocesses as the English are, the Bishops Courts, and their manner of Proceeding, have a better Platform, than he has now done it by such a ridiculous Discourse of a *Protestant Grandfather being the Son of his Popish Grandson*.

By Popery, such Men as the Doctor talks of, mean the whole System of Corruptions own'd and avow'd by that Church.

They don't think themselves oblig'd to examine, whether the thing they esteem'd Popish, were in being before some Points of Popery were started, but only whether they are Corruptions or no; and whether if they are, they are held by the Papists. I will for once try the Doctor.

He tells us Popery did not begin in the World till above two, or about three hundred Years after the Reign of *Constantine* the Great: This brings us therefore to about the Year 600; or, I suppose, the remarkable 606, for the Beginning of Popery: I ask the Doctor, Whether the worshipping of Saints will be allow'd by him to be a Piece of Popery? It has hitherto, I think, been so acknowledg'd; and yet if he will please to look into Mr. *Mede*, in the place I cited before, he will find that it was maintained by the famous *Theodore*, who was a Bishop soon after the Year 420.

I hope I have now fully satisfy'd the Reader, that the Doctor has nothing material to say against the Ministry of the Dissenters; and the Reader will without my enlarging, see that his Admonition in the Conclusion is impertinent.

Their Ordination is every whit as valid and Episcopal, and there is not one Scripture Qualification of it that is wanting.

If the Doctor thinks he may lay any stress upon our Places of Worship, as not so fine and handsome, we are ready to defend our Practices, and are well satisfy'd, that a Worship consonant to the Scripture-Rules, will be pleasing to God, tho' the Circumstances of the Worshipers do prevent their having the Place either so beautiful or convenient as might be desir'd.

It is not the Place, tho' consecrated with all the Ceremonies, and by all the Bishops in the World, will make a Person's Service more acceptable to God. 'Tis not one place or another that God now regards, but he seeks such to worship him, as worship him in Spirit and in Truth, and with such he is well pleas'd, however the Doctor, and Men of his narrow Principles should be offended.

If the Doctor apprehends the Mischief of Schism so great, and is not mistaken, we think we have reason to pity the Schismatics;

ticks; and add moreover, that tho' we own that any Sin, and consequently Schism, is in it self of a destructive, damning Nature, yet we take not upon us to judge the Conformists eternal State, as they many of them do very freely ours. We know they have a merciful God to deal with, who knows how to make Allowances for the Prejudices of Education, or the Byass that the Vogue of the World and Interest do often, in some measure, give to Men that are yet truly sincere and upright.

The Doctor would fain have us own and submit to the Charge of Schism, as may be seen by his Postscript; but we say the Charge is utterly groundless, and if any of us hold that Principle, *That Separation from a Church is no Schism or sinful Separation, so long as 'tis not accompany'd with Uncharitableness*; It is not from any Suspicion that the Blame of the Separation (and so the Guilt of Schism) lies on our side; nor is it from any Tenderness to ourselves, but if any thing sways us, 'tis rather a Willingness to think the most favourably of our Brethren. And if the Doctor is offended at our charitable Sense, and resolved to mistake it, we cannot help it. I confess, for my own part, tho' I desire my Charity may be as extensive as reasonably it may be, yet 'tis not built upon that Notion which the Doctor here speaks of, which yet I acknowledge is espous'd and urg'd in the present Case by some Dissenters; but rather upon what I mention'd before, viz. the Goodness of God, who will put a favourable Construction upon, and mercifully pardon the involuntary Mistakes that good Men are liable to.

As to the Places of Scripture the Doctor cites, they are general, and are easily apply'd as a Man pleases. But I have shewn that the Doctor has not said any thing that will bear him out in applying them to us. I shall make no other Return to them,

than by proposing to his serious Consideration a few Questions in the Words of the late Bp. *Stillingfleet*: "What Ground can

" there be, why Christians should not stand upon the same Terms
 " now, which they did in the time of Christ and his Apostles?
 " Was not Religion sufficiently guarded, and fenced in then?
 " Was there ever more true and cordial Reverence in the Worship of God? What Charter has Christ given the Church to
 " bind Men up to more than himself has done? Or to exclude
 " those from her Society, who may be admitted into Heaven?
 " Will Christ ever thank Men at the Great Day for keeping such
 " out from the Communion of the Church, whom he will vouch-
 " safe not only Crowns of Glory to, but it may be *Aureole* too,
 " if there be any such things there? When the Doctor has considered these things duly, he may better determine whether his

Time

Time and Pains spent in misrepresenting, censuring and condemning us, were not likely to turn to a more comfortable Account to him, if spent in endeavouring to allay the Heats, and mend the Tempers of those, who by their Impositions have caus'd such Differences and Distractions in this part of the Christian World. I can see a truly noble Charity in Men that plead for Abatement to be made in things they confess unnecessary, to such as profess they esteem them sinful, and who, tho' they can satisfy themselves of the Lawfulness of the impos'd Terms of Communion, yet seek for a Relaxation of them for those that cannot. But I defy the Doctor to find me out a Jew, Papist or Turk, that has not Charity enough to equal what (for ought I can find) the Doctor is yet arriv'd to: I mean to persuade Men to be of his own Opinion, while he threatens them with nothing less than Damnation, if they are not.

I am not much concern'd at the Doctor's second Postscript, I have not the Pamphlet by me that he pretends to cite for our Opinions formerly. I observe his scrupulous Conscience will not suffer him, tho' in a Citation, to say the *Lancashire Ministers*, or *London Ministers*, but instead of Ministers, he takes the Liberty to put in Teachers, and so he styles himself in the Title Page a Minister, and Mr. D. a Dissenting Teacher. Suppose we should use this Language, and only call the Doctor and his Brethren the Parish Teachers, I believe the Doctor would not be well-pleas'd. In a free Age this Narrowness of Spirit exposes a Man to Scorn.

But now let it be suppos'd, that with more Fairness he cites the Body than the Title of the Book. I will tell the Doctor, that if the Dissenters spake too hardly against Toleration at that time, Men of the Doctor's Principles have very thoroughly convinc'd them of their Mistake. 'Tis one received Principle of the Dissenters, that no Man or Body of Men, are to be the Standard of Truth, and that their Notions are not to be enslaved to the Sentiments of those whom they most value. And if they have so profited by the Severities they have endur'd, and those irrefragable Arguments by which the Rights of the Subject have been of late Years clear'd and vindicated, as to understand that Matter a little better, why should the Doctor censure them? or why them alone? Do they not herein agree with the Sentiments of the whole Nation, except the Voraries for Bigotry, and a French Government? But if the Dissenters Principles and Practices are so occasional as the Doctor would represent them, I beseech him to tell me why they should stand in need of any Toleration at all? Why do they not so serve themselves of them, as to fall in intirely with the Establishment? What was it that bewitch'd them to endure a Series of Sufferings for above 20 Years together? What did they propose to

to themselves to get by standing out against the severest Acts of Parliament, or by exposing themselves to the Fury and Clamours of an angry Party, that had got the Power on their Side? Why did they not improve this Artifice of shifting their Principles to secure their Benefices ; as we have seen a great many Church-men, who chang'd their Notions of Passive Obedience and Non-Resistance, at the very Nick of Time when they must have been otherwise ejected ?

Or if the Doctor thinks they have no Principles at all, why did they not subscribe and swear at the same rate, as a great many took the Oaths to King *William*, and hated him and his Government when they had done, and still revile his glorious Memory.

'Tis the Glory of the Dissenters, that they so long suffer'd among other things for refusing to declare, that 'tis not lawful upon any Pretence whatever, to take up Arms against the King, &c. A Declaration, which if it had been more than occasionally believed, subscrib'd and kept, would have ruin'd this Nation. And if the Dissenters were in the right, in refusing to subscribe that Declaration, and therefore that Point of Conformity is now justly remov'd, I would ask by the way, whether they were Schismatics while it was requir'd?

Thus, Sir, I have now gone through the Doctor's Letter. If the rest of his Writings against us are of a Piece with this, they are like to do us very little Harm, unless the Magisterial Air with which he writes, should make Amends with any for the Weakness of his Arguments. I hope 'twill be no Offence to declare that it does not at all convince,

7 DE 61

S I R,

Your Hearty Friend and Servant.

REMARKS

ON

Dr. *WELLS*

HIS

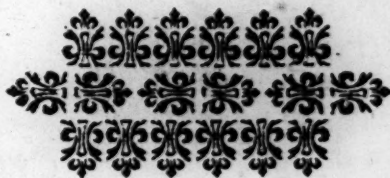
LETTER

TO A

Dissenting Parishioner.

In a Second Letter to a Friend.

The Third Edition.



L O N D O N,

Printed by *J. Humfreys*, for *John Lawrence*,
at the *Angel* in the *Poultry*. 1711.

REMARKS

ON

DR. WELLS

HIS

LETTER

TO A



in a letter to a friend

THE RIGHT HONORABLE

THE LORD CHANCELLOR

OF GREAT BRITAIN

1793

Printed by J. G. Smith, at the British Museum, 1793.

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S I R,

WHEN I sent you my Remarks upon the Doctor's Letter to Mr. Dowley, I had not seen that to a dissenting Parishioner ; but it has since come to my Hands ; and I find upon the Perusal of it, that many things in it have received an Answer in my former, and so will the less need to be consider'd again in this. There are several things in this Letter of the Doctor's which I shall not take notice of, as being of no moment in the present Controversy ; his solemn Harangues, grave Admonitions, and insulting Triumphs, add nothing of Weight to his Arguments ; and therefore when *these* have received an Answer, every one will discern *the other* do no hurt to our Cause. I intend likewise to be sparing in my Animadversions on his Reproaches, and the damning Sentences which he passes upon us, it being evident, we are not to stand or fall by his Judgment.

The first thing we are concerned to take notice of, is what the Doctor undertakes to prove ; *That we are all under an indispensable Obligation to follow the Rules and Directions of such as are duly Authoriz'd to govern that Part of the Christian Church, which is within this Nation, and that in all things by them required of us that are not sinful* : To which purpose he urges Heb, 13. 17. *Obey them that have the Rule over you, and submit your selves, &c.* This, he says, is to be understood of Obedience and Submission to Spiritual Rulers ; which I grant : But then he adds, *That from this Text it appears, (1.) That in the Catholick or Universal Church, and consequently in (every distinct part thereof, that is) every National Church, there are some whose Office it is to rule ; and therefore, among other things, to give Rules and Directions concerning all Circumstances relating to the Church, that are left undetermin'd by Christ and his Apostles.*

I have already consider'd the Text from which the Doctor argues in this Place ; and,

1. I desire that it may be remember'd, (as it is there alledged) that our Obedience can be only due to things not sinfully commanded by Rulers.

2. I add, that the Doctor's Inference is not good, that because some are Rulers, therefore they have Power to determine all Circumstances relating to the Church, left undetermin'd by Christ and his Apostles ; for they are only Rulers under Christ, the supreme Head and King of the Church ; and therefore their being Rulers, is very consistent with a much more restrain'd and limited Power, than what the Doctor assigns them.

Our Justices of the Peace are Rulers, and yet have not a Power of determining all things undetermin'd by the Parliament: They can't bind Men where the Parliament has not done it before;

3. There may be many Circumstances which Christ design'd should always be left undetermin'd; and therefore the Doctor should produce that Commission whereby Christ has empower'd them to determine these things; for I suppose no Man can doubt, but that he might set Rulers in his Church, tho' he had such a Design.

4. That it does not appear, that Christ has left to the Rulers of his Church, any Power of determining other Circumstances, than those that are in order to the Execution of his own Commands: They are authoriz'd and requir'd to teach them to observe all things whatsoever he had commanded them, *Mat. 28. 20.* but no more that I can find; and therefore those Circumstances which must be determin'd, or his Commands can't be obey'd, they must determine. So the Circumstances of Time and Place must be determin'd, or the Command of Publick Worship can't be observ'd. And as to such Circumstances, there may be Reasons in different Times and Places, for different Determinations, which those on the Spot will be best able to judge of. And so the Wisdom and Goodness of our great Law-giver is manifest, in his leaving these things undetermin'd. But this do's not in the least establish their Power to appoint such things as are no way necessary or useful, in order to our observing what he has commanded, such as the Cross in Baptism, &c.

5. In those things, in which (tho' the Law of Christ has really left Men at Liberty) Christians may differ in their Apprehensions, Church-Rulers have not a Power to determine which side shall be taken. That this is a supposable Case, may appear by *Rom. 14.* And should all these things in dispute be really lawful, yet since many judge them unlawful, and they are not any way necessary or useful, Church-Rulers have no Power to impose them, for this plain Reason, that this agrees not with the very end of their Power, which is for Edification, and not for Destruction; *2 Cor. 10. 8.* Now, this Power can't be for Edification; for in such things where God has left us to our Liberty, we are not the better for doing 'em, nor the worse for not doing 'em; *1 Cor. 8. 8.* It is to destruction; as it is prejudicial to the Soul of a Christian, if he obeys while he is not satisfied of the Lawfulness of the thing enjoind; or as it is prejudicial to the Unity and Peace of the Church, while it necessitates the doubting Christian to separate, that he may not wound his Conscience.

6. When the Doctor says, That from *Heb. 13. 17.* it appears, that in the Catholick, and consequently in (every particular part thereof,

of, that is) every National Church, there are some whose Office it is to rule. I must own I am at a loss to understand him : That it appears from thence, that in all those particular Churches, to which the Apostle wrote, there were Rulers, I grant, and that there should be such in all other Churches of the like Nature, is acknowledged likewise: But as the Apostle speaks not of the Catholick Church, I am not able to discern the Reason of his Consequence. One would think, that if the Text yields any Argument for the Doctor, it must be this; In all Particular Churches there are Rulers, and consequently there must be such in National Churches (and then if he has a mind to pleasure the Popish Usurpers, he may add) and consequently there must be such in the Catholick or Universal Church: The Catholick Church has no other governing Head but Christ; and he governs it, not by any Governor, or any Body or Assembly of Governors set over it as Catholick, but Governors set over the several distinct Parts of which it is constituted.

The Question now comes to this; Into what kind of Parts is it the Will of Christ that the Church Catholick should be divided? Or what Notion do's the Scripture give us of those Churches which had Rulers set over them? The Doctor says, that in every National Church there must be some whose Office it is to rule. But why should he not look upon himself concern'd to shew us the Institution of a National Church? I must declare, I find nothing of this Nature in the New Testament, where I meet with no other than these two sorts of Churches, the Catholick Church, and the Churches of one particular City or Place. The Christian Societies of a whole Country, are never spoken of as one Church, but as Churches, as the Churches in *Judea*, 1 Thes. 2. 14. The Churches of *Macedonia* 2 Cor. 8. 1. The Churches of *Asia*, 1 Cor. 16. 19. The Churches of *Galatia*, 1 Cor. 16. 1. Gal. 1. 2. And there is not one Instance to the contrary in the New Testament; so that it is not fair for the Doctor to argue, that because there ought to be Rulers in those Churches which Christ has instituted, and we are oblig'd to submit to them, therefore Men may, when they have devis'd a new Species and kind of Churches, appoint Governours over them, and require us to submit to them. That every distinct Church in those several Countries, had a full and compleat Power of Government within it self, I can't think will be denied: and this was a sacred Trust committed to them for their own Preservation, and other most valuable Purposes. And I humbly propose it to Consideration, whether it be reasonable to suppose that they could of right part with that Power they were originally intrusted with, and place it in the Hands of others? that is, Whether the Governours of the several Churches, for instance, of *Asia*, having

having received their Government from Christ over their respective Churches, could agree together to establish an higher Power over themselves? Or could lawfully submit to any body of Men that claim'd it? If they had no Right to this, I think the Commands of National Rulers will be of little Moment; for every Christian Church in a Nation, is to resume its own Right.

This Power of the Rulers of a National Church is that which often recurs in the Doctor's Letter, and indeed is the main Foundation upon which he builds. And therefore if I should leave off here, I should fully have answered the Doctor, till he gives us proof of that which he now takes for granted, concerning the Right of a National Church.

But let us hear his other Argument.

You know that St. Paul has given this general Rule in reference to Divine Worship, Let all things be done decently, and in order, 1 Cor. 14. 40. But no particular Rules relating to the several Circumstances of Decency and Order, are to be met with in the Scriptures: And therefore the Doctor argues, That either Christ was deficient in not leaving such Rules, or else he has provided for the same, by this Power lodg'd in Rulers.

To which I answer, That when the Doctor would take off the Objection from those Words, *Teaching for Doctrines* Pag. 14. *the Commandments of Men*; he tells us from the Context, that Christ speaks only against such Traditions or Commandments of Men as did transgress the Commandments of God, and made the Commandments of God of none Effect. How truly he alledges this, will be consider'd in its proper Place: We only crave leave to imitate the Doctor, and to give our Answer from the Context, and the Scope of the Apostle. Now in the Place alledg'd, he argues against those things which carried in them an Indecency and Disorder, that was not owing to their being particularly forbid by Church-Rulers (for indeed this Indecency and Disorder, seems to have been wholly among the Church-Rulers themselves) but was obvious to all Men, according to the Natural Sentiments they have of Decency and Order: And therefore the Apostle appeals here to their own Judg-

* *Compare* *ments* *, and those of the Unlearned, and even of 1 Cor. 11. 13. *Unbelievers, ver. 23.* If therefore the whole Church be come together, and all speak with Tongues, and there come in those that are unlearn'd, or Unbelievers, will they not say that you are mad? The Practice therefore which he speaks against was so indecent and disorderly, that it was fit for none but Mad-men, and so could not be seemly in a Christian Assembly: And when such things as these, which are contrary to Men's Natural Notions of Decency and Order are avoided, the Apostle's Precept

cept will be observed. But from hence to infer the Power of Church-Rulers by their Commands, to create a Decency in those things that have none at all in themselves, is wide from the Purpose. The Apostle supposes the things decent, and therefore urges them; and the Doctor argues from hence the Authority of Rulers to direct us when we are to kneel, stand or bow; whether there be any Decency in these things, or no.

'Tis extravagant, to think there is any Decency in standing at the reading of the same part of the Scripture, when read as a Gospel; and sitting when read as a Lesson; or that there is any Decency in bowing at the Name of Jesus, toward an Altar, or the East. And if there be nothing of a natural Decency in these things, the Doctor cannot argue from this Text the Power of Rulers to impose them.

Again by the same sort of Argument, it will follow, That the Rulers of the Church have full Power to make, and appoint all such Officers (even over and above those mention'd by Christ and his Apostles) as they shall judge convenient for the well governing of the Church, and consequently to make Arch-Bishops, Arch-Deacons, Chancellors, Officials, Apparitors, &c.

What has been already said, serves for a sufficient Answer to this. Christ has appointed Rulers in his Church; he has given them a Power to take care of the Execution of his Laws: And he has made it their Duty to use this Power, and they have no Right to abridge themselves of it, as they really do, when they subject themselves to such Officers as he has not appointed, or commit that Power to others, which according to his Appointment, was at first peculiar to themselves: And if the Doctor's Notion be true, the Form of Church-Government must be the most mutable Creature in the World.

According to the Doctor's way of arguing, if National Churches may create a new sort of Officers (Arch-Bishops) why may not the Arch-Bishops of several Nations agree to make Patriarchs? and all the Patriarchs make a Pope? Or at least the Doctor bids fair for the setting up of an English National Pope, according to what some suspected to be the Design of a certain Prelate, who refused a Cardinal's Cap.

And what can be more absurd, than to dispute, whether Presbyters (Officers of Divine Appointment) have the Government of the Church committed to them, and yet make Chancellors (a Parcel of meer Lay-men) Judges in Spiritual Courts, of the most important Concerns, as Excommunications, &c.

2. The Doctor says, *It appears from Heb. 13: 17. That all other Christians are bound in Conscience to obey and submit to the said Rulers of the Church.*

I answer in the Doctor's own Words, *That as far as the Power of*

the Ruler doth extend on the one hand, so far on the other side is to be extended the Obedience of those under Rule: that is, A Christian is bound to obey those whom God has set over him, so long as they act according to their Commission; but when they go beyond that, they become Tyrannical, and he is at his Liberty.

But the Doctor argues, That there is no Limitation annex'd, whereby the Obedience required should be restrain'd to such Matters as are determin'd by Christ and his Apostles.

I answer, there is no Limitation annex'd when we are requir'd to obey Magistrates, *Tit. 3. 1.* And yet this Nation is very sensible, that such may go beyond the Power that is committed to them, and that then Subjects are not bound to obey.

Or again, it is very possible that Civil Rulers may command one thing, and Church Rulers another; as, for ought I see, is actually the Case as to the whole Body of the Canons of 1640, and of many of those of 1603. Or again, the like Obedience is urg'd upon Children to their Parents, *Ephes. 6. 1.* and upon Servants to their Masters, *ver. 5.* And these must be supposed not to interfere with one another: And therefore 'tis plain, we must here distinguish the Nature of the several Powers; and in the particular Case before us, must judge what the Obedience is that we are to yield to the Rulers of the Church, by the Commission and Authority they have receiv'd from Christ; and what that is I have observed already. But farther, the Text it self do's contain a Limitation in the Reason that is given, *for they watch for your Souls:* And therefore so long only as they watch for the Good of my Soul, and in those things wherein they do so, I am to submit to them, and obey them; but when they enjoyn things that can't possibly do my Soul any Good, as the Crois in Baptism, bowing toward an Altar, &c. They herein watch for themselves, and the setting up of their own Authority, and watch not for my Soul, except to make a Prey of it; and therefore herein the Apostle do's not require me to obey them.

But (says the Doctor) no Christian can be reasonably suppos'd to scruple giving Obedience to what is expressly commanded by Christ and his Apostles; and therefore if the Obedience requir'd, is to be understood to extend no farther than to what is expressly commanded in the Scriptures, then there seems to be no occasion left for the inspir'd Writer to give any such Precept.

To which I might answer, that some things not determin'd, or expressly commanded by Christ, were yet necessary to be determin'd in order to the obeying his express Commands; and in such things they were to obey their Rulers. But passing that I would fain have the Doctor make good his Assertion; for I fear it will be found at last, that in all Ages of the Church there have been many Christians (*i. e.* many who profess'd themselves such, and were in vi-

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sible Communion with the Church) who scrupled giving Obedience
 to the exprefs Laws of Christ, and (to use some of the Doctor's words)
*The Inspir'd Writer foreseeing that in after Ages, (and indeed finding it
 too true in his own) some might arise, who, not so much out of Humour
 as out of Perverseness, and desperate Wickedness, might be Drunkards,
 Whore-mongers, Liars, Cheats, &c. (tho' these things were direct-
 ly opposite to the exprefs Laws of Christ) he urges them to be subject
 to their Rulers, for this Reason, because they in their publick and
 private Exhortations, and by the Discipline appointed by Christ, were
 to urge and inculcate the avoiding these things, and to press upon
 them the contrary Vertues. I am sure, the Doctor's Representation
 will not fit any Age of the Church; no not that in the Time of the
 Apostles, as may be seen by the Church of Corimb, of whose Disor-
 ders we read: And by the Asian Churches, Rev. 2, & 3. And the He-
 brew Christians, (to whom this Epistle was written) were exceeding
 prone to depart from Christ and his holy Religion, from the great
 Affection which they retained to Judaism: And hence he continually
 exhorts them to Stedfastness in the Christian Religion; and upon this
 very account urges them to regard their Rulers in this Chapter, ver.
 7, 8. *Nay, that the Obedience to Church-Rulers, requir'd in the aforesaid
 Text, is to be understood principally and chiefly in reference to things de-
 termin'd only by their Authority, may be farther argued from Propriety of
 speech. And this will appear from the Distinction made use of by St. Paul,
 1 Cor. 7. For ver. 10. where he delivers what was by our Saviour himself en-
 join'd to married Persons, having at first said, Unto the Married I command;
 he presently recalls himself, as having spoken less accurately, and subjoins,
 Yet not I, (that is, in strict Propriety of Speech, not I) but the Lord. And
 in like manner, ver. 12. he says, But to the rest speak I (that is more pro-
 perly I) not the Lord, viz. By any exprefs Command or Determination in
 Scripture. Now, according to this Distinction, to observe or do what is
 expresly commanded in Scripture, is to obey God himself, and not (properly)
 the Rulers of the Church, and then only we can be said (properly) to obey the
 Church-Rulers themselves, when we observe or do somewhat commanded by
 them, tho' it be not commanded in the Scripture.**

I do not much dislike the Doctor's Interpretation of the Text, when
 the Apostle says, *Yet not I, but the Lord*; that he means that Christ
 himself had by his own Word, while on Earth, decided the Case; and
 that therefore what he was speaking of, was rather to be look'd upon
 as the Command of Christ immediately, and not mediately by his Apo-
 stles. But then when he says, *To the rest speak I, not the Lord*; the
 meaning only is, that Christ had said nothing of that matter while on
 Earth. Nor is the Apostle to be understood, as tho' he did not give
 this Command by Inspiration, or as tho' this were not to be consid-
 er'd as properly the Command of Christ. To which purpose the Rea-
 der may consult Dr. *Whitby's* Preface to his Annotations, who has ex-
 cellently well clear'd this Matter. And what is now all our Doctor's

Harangue to the Purpose? *St. Paul* distinguishes what *Christ* had said while on Earth, from what he himself wrote by the immediate Direction and Inspiration of his Spirit.

Does the Doctor think this will help him in his Argument, to prove the Power of Church-Rulers, who have no such Inspiration? Or would he persuade us, that to obey the Commands which *Christ* gave by the infallible Direction of his Spirit, is not properly to obey *Christ*? I will indeed own, that to obey Church-Rulers, when they command what *Christ* does no ways command, is not properly to obey *Christ*: And add farther, that till they can give us good Evidence of that Inspiration the Apostles had, I cannot look upon my self obliged by the Commands they are pleas'd to enact. It is certain, where the Apostles had no Rule themselves, they pretended not to give any. The things enjoin'd at the Council of *Jerusalem*, were necessary things, which it seem'd good to the Holy Ghost and to the Apostles, to lay upon Christians; *Acts* 15. 28. In other things they left Christians to their Liberty, *Rom.* 14. And if the Apostles themselves claim'd not a Power of determining such Matters, I cannot but question the Right of all Church-Rulers who come after them.

I shall take notice of his other Consideration that follows here, when I come to consider the 8th Objection which he speaks to; and therefore now pass on his 2d General Head, which is, as he tells us;

II. *To prove that the Governours of that Part of the Christian Church, which is within this Kingdom, are (so far as concerns the Controversie between us and you) those we now a-days call Bishops.*

The Doctor is larger on this Head in his other Letter; and having consider'd that already, I refer the Reader to my other Letter: I shall only add;

1. That the Doctor has here left out the Lower House of Convocation, who are all Presbyters; and yet they in each Province concur to the making of Canons; and therefore one would think, should be part of the Spiritual Legislature, or of the Government of the National Church. And he has left out the Prince, without whose Approbation their Canon signifies nothing. He has left out the Parliament, who have a Power to disannul any of their Canons, or to make what Alterations they please in the National Church. And indeed it is hard to say, who are the Governors of our National Church: For the Bishops can't in any respect be look'd upon as more than a Part of the Spiritual Legislature: And as we pretend that Ministers should be under *Christ*, just such are they in their several Diocesses under the Convocation, bound by their Commands, and oblig'd to see to the Execution of them, so far as the Civil Government will permit them.

2. As it is unreasonable for Men to alter the very Species of Churches from the first Institution, so it is unreasonable to pretend that Men come to have a Right to rule the Church in any other way than what *Christ* has appointed; and I fear it will be hard to find where he has intrusted

Intrusted the Civil Magistrate with the Power to chuse the Governours of his Church.

The Doctor then tells his Parishioner, *That he has somewhat experienc'd, that after the greatest Evidence that can be desired from Antiquity in this Case, there is at last an Evasion ready to be made use of by him, that he is not Scholar enough to enter into the Merits of the Controversy.*

But in my Apprehension, no great Matter of Scholarship is requisite in this Case. Every Christian's Religion should be in his Bible; and he need not much regard those that argue from any other kind of Testimony. Now I don't think it so hard a matter for Men to understand, whether according to the Scripture there were Bishops appointed over Presbyters. And when I consider that this Obedience to Bishops is that which the Doctor requires under Pain of Damnation, and would persuade us that the believing every thing Reveald in the Scriptures, and obeying all the Commands of Christ, will not save a Man who do's not obey the Bishops, I cannot but think, that the fullest and clearest Evidence is to be given us from the Scriptures, that this is our Duty, and that the Necessity of such Obedience should be shewn as clearly and positively express'd, as is the Necessity of Faith and Holiness. But the Doctor himself sufficiently declares, that this is not the State of the Case; when he tells us, *That the Order of Apostles was distinct from the Order of Presbyters, and the same with what we now call the Order of Bishops, is fairly to be gather'd from the New Testament it self, and is evident beyond all Contradiction from the Writings of the Primitive Christians.* Now this should be evident beyond all Contradiction from the New Testament it self, if it were an Article of Faith necessary to be believed in order to Salvation. I have already sufficiently answer'd what he here asserts, and to his *Ignatius* I oppose *Clemens* and *Polycarp*, as ancient Witnesses, who give a plain Testimony of the two-fold Order; and add, that we oppose not the Episcopacy mention'd by *Ignatius* himself.

But let us see how the Doctor answers in this Case. He asks him, *What is the Consequence of this? Is it not that you ought, in all such Cases too difficult for your self to determine, to betake your self to him, who is appointed by God to be your immediate Guide in all Religious Matters, that is, to your Parish-Minister?* And that the Parish-Ministers are thus appointed by God, he labours to prove by this Reason, because they are appointed by the Bishops, the Governours of the National Church.

Now in answer to this, 1. I desire the Reader to observe what he means by betaking himself to his Parish-Minister, that is, that he is not only to consult him, but to submit his own Judgment to his, as I think is plainly the Doctor's Scheme in many Places. Now this is what the Papists would fain urge People to, but is a Principle very contrary to the main Foundation of Protestants, and the Rule of the Apostle, *Prove all things.* And the Papists are willing to put the Matter on the same Foot, of Cases too difficult for the Laity. But we

deny, that any thing necessary to Salvation is too hard and difficult for such to determine.

2. I deny, for many Reasons already mention'd, that the Bishops have the Power pretended.

3. The Appointment of a Bishop is only a matter of Form, he having no Right to refuse the Presentation of a Patron, who can have no Right by the Laws of Christ, to chuse a Guide for the Souls of the whole Parish.

4. The Appointment of a Bishop is often not necessary, as in many Places, which are exempt from Episcopal Jurisdiction.

Whence you may learn, that in respect to the Church, 'tis no more left to your own Will or Choice, whom you will look upon as your true Pastor or Minister, than in respect to the State 'tis left to your own Will or Choice, whom you look upon as your Constable, &c. but as he that is duly appointed by the Civil Magistrate to be the Constable of your Parish, is to be acknowled'd as your Constable; so he that is duly appointed by the proper spiritual Magistrate to be the Minister of your Parish, is to be acknowledg'd on all accounts as your Minister or Pastor, and as such is to be your Guide in spiritual Matters.

Not to repeat what I said before, I answer, that the Doctor's Parallel will not be much amiss, when rightly put, that is thus; As he that is chosen by the Parish, according to the fixed Laws of the Land, to be Constable, is to be look'd upon as a Constable of the Parish; so he that is chosen by the Church, according to the Laws of Christ, to be the Minister of it, is to be look'd upon as the true Minister of the Church.

As to what follows, it is only silly Wheedling (not unusual in the Doctor's way of Writing) that will suit any Climate, Protestant or Popish. The Case is not so difficult, but that any ordinary Understanding, upon impartial Consideration, may judge of it. I will be so free as to say, that the Presentation of a Patron, or the Institution and Induction of a Bishop, have not as yet been prov'd to be full Evidences of a Divine Appointment of a Man to be the Minister of a Parish. And he that is of my Mind, and is for choosing another to be the Guide of his Soul, acts, for ought I can see, very warrantably. And tho' the Errors of a Minister will not justify the Errors of the People, and the Doctor is mistaken when he says the Error is not *properly* the Peoples, but the Ministers, when he leads them into it, for it is *properly* the Error of both, because both are in the wrong, and both ought to search the Scriptures, and the People are not to rely upon any Minister's Authority for the Truth of what he says; yet I shall always entertain such Notions of God's Mercy, as to think he will pardon the involuntary Errors of all sincere and humble Souls, who search the Scriptures for Information, and act according to the best Light they can get from thence, in Matters that relate to their spiritual Benefit; and by this Rule I judge indifferently of Church-men and Dissenters.

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III. His third general Head is, *That nothing sinful is requir'd of you by the Bishops, and therefore that there can be no warrantable Excuse or Argument for your refusing to observe the Rules of the Church.*

I might pass over this Head, till the Doctor has better establish'd the Right of our Diocesan Bishops, to be Governours of all the Churches in this Nation, and till he has prov'd, that all Governours have a Power to enjoyn every thing not sinful, both which I have before consider'd,

The Doctor says, they require nothing *that is against any Precept in the whole Scripture.* Of this I have had, and shall yet have occasion to speak elsewhere.

The Doctor is pleas'd to instance in some things which he says are not sinful; as,

The Wearing the Surplice. I will own, that a Garb in it self is an indifferent thing, and that the wearing a Surplice in the Worship of God, absolutely speaking, is not, in my Apprehension, sinful. But this being one of the Ceremonies of the Church, it is to be consider'd for what Use it is retain'd and enjoyn'd. Now that we learn from the Preface to the Book of Common-Prayer, which tells us, that *other (Ceremonies) there be, which altho' they have been devis'd by Man, yet it is thought good to reserve them still, as well for a decent Order in the Church (for the which they were first devis'd) as because they pertain to Edification;* and afterwards they speak of these Ceremonies *as serving to decent Order and godly Discipline, and as apt to stir up the dull Mind of Man to the Remembrance of his Duty to God, by some notable and special Signification, whereby he might be edify'd.* Now I cannot see how this Use of the Ceremony can be allow'd. If it were only a matter of Decency, I doubt not but a Man might lawfully use it, who was satisfy'd of the Decency of it; tho' I confess I can't see any such thing in it. But when it is carry'd farther than this, and is to be look'd upon as Edifying the Soul, this places it at a wide distance from the indifferent things spoken of by the Apostle, which on either side render'd not a Person either better or worse. Nay, this exactly agrees with the Ceremony urg'd by the Pharisees, and condemn'd by Christ, that I can't think how it can be justify'd. For I could fain know, whether washing Hands was not as proper to put a Person in mind of inward Purity as the Surplice?

Bowing at the Name of Jesus, or towards the Altar. I know there are some in the Communion of the Church of England, who do not look upon themselves obliged to these. As to the first, it is enjoyn'd by the Canons of 1603, as are many other things which do not now oblige, and are not observ'd. The greatest Objection I have against this, is, that I can see no manner of Reason why I should do it, as 'tis enjoyn'd. The Service God requires of me, and which I am therefore bound to render to him, is a reasonable Service, and how I can pretend to serve God acceptably, with a Service of which I can
give

give no Reason at all, I am yet to seek. And what Reason can there be given, why I should bow at the Name Jesus, and not at that of Saviour, (which is the very same) or at that of *Emanuel, Lord, God Jehovah, &c.*

But then as to his other Instance, *Bowing towards the Altar*; I own this would offend me much more; but I do not think it is enjoyned by the Church; it is left to every ones Liberty by the Canons of 1640. And I cannot but declare, that this alone, if enjoyn'd, would cause me to separate from any Communion whatever. I know very well, the Jews bow'd toward the Cloud, and the Temple, &c. but the Reason of this, was God's Presence in those, visible Symbols and Tokens hereof. And, so far as I can apprehend, had not God been so present, they would have been guilty of Idolatry in such Worship towards those things. I think Bp. *Stillingsfleet* has

See Discourse concerning Idolatry, &c. p. 81, & seq.

well shewn, that the *Israelites* were guilty of Idolatry, in worshipping the Golden Calf in the Wilderness, and the Calves in *Dan* and *Bethel*, altho' they only look'd upon these as Symbols of the Divine Presence, and design'd to worship the true God and not the Calves themselves. It ought therefore to be evident, that there is the special Presence of God continually at the Altar, or that the Altar is a Symbol thereof; or else I can't see how such an Action, as bowing towards an Altar, can be vindicated. To say, that this is in Conformity to the Primitive Church, signifies nothing; for the Question then returns, Whether the Primitive Church acted according to the Scriptures? Bish.

Body of Divin. p. 232.

Usher says, "Altho' the grois Idolatry of Popery be taken away from among us, yet the Corrupt on cleaveth still to the Hearts of many; as may be seen in them that make Courtesies to the Chancel, when the High Altar stood."

Kneeling particularly at the Sacrament: I do not deny the Lawfulness of this Posture, to him who is so perswaded in his own Mind, and yet I can see no reason to doubt of the Sincerity of many, who do not believe it to be lawful: Nor can I think such an Opinion a sufficient Reason to exclude a Person from Christian Communion, and therefore do deny the Power of Rulers to impose it.

The Cross in Baptism. This is us'd as a Sign or Pledge of the Merits of Christ. 'Tis enough that the Power to impose it is not made out; and therefore I shall not farther alledge what convinces me of the Unlawfulness of it in it self.

Of Set Forms of Prayer: I have spoken largely in my other Letter, and so pass them over here.

IV. Next the Doctor proceeds to answer our Objections.

1. The first Objection is taken from *Mat. 15. 9. But in vain they worship me, teaching for Doctrines the Commandments of Men.*

this Text (says he) is generally urg'd by your Writers, against observing the Rules and Orders of our Church, as being the Commandments of Men, (or in the common Language) Humane Ordinances. How we argue from this Text, may be seen in my other Letter; and I think the Doctor has said very little in this Place to take off the Force of the Objection.

But (says he) with how little Reason this Text is wrested by your Party, against the Rulers of our Church, will quickly appear: For if you consult the former part of the Chapter, you will find, that our Saviour is therein speaking only against such Traditions or Commandments of Men, as did transgress the Commandments of God, ver. 3. and make the Commandments of God of none Effect, ver. 6.

The Case is plainly this; The Scribes and Pharisees blame Christ's Disciples for transgressing the Tradition of the Elders, by eating with unwashen Hands. There are two Parts of our Lord's Answer to this Accusation. (1.) The Accusation is retorted, and a much greater Charge is brought by him against them, for transgressing God's Commandments by their Traditions; and their heinous Wickedness, and notorious Hypocrisy, was evidenc'd by their Concern about such a Trifling Tradition, while they so directly oppos'd the Commandment of God, and rendred it of none Effect. What this Command of God which is meant, was, may be seen by the Words of the Evangelist; *But he answer'd, and said to them, Why do you also transgress the Commandment of God by your Tradition? For God commanded, saying, Honour thy Father and thy Mother; and he that curseth Father or Mother, let him die the Death. But ye say, Whosoever shall say to his Father, or Mother, 'tis a Gift by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me, and honour not his Father, or his Mother, he shall be free. Thus have ye made the Commandment of God of none Effect through your Tradition.* (2.) The other Part of our Lord's Answer, is a proper Vindication of his Disciples; in which, he tells the Pharisees, that those Rules they gave about washing Hands, &c. and upon which they so much insisted, were not pleasing to God, and so were not binding: And to this part of his Answer belong those Words; *But in vain do they worship, &c.* and this is evident, by comparing Matthew and Mark, who both of them distinguish these two Parts of our Lord's Answer, which being so distinct and different, they do not observe the same Order in recording them. But St. Mark has set down this latter first, which is set down last by St. Matthew; and therefore I desire the Reader to observe how the Words run in Mark, immediately upon the Charge, Mark 7. 6. *He answer'd and said unto them, Well saith Esaias prophesied of you, Hypocrites, as it is written, This People honoureth me with their Lips, but their Heart is far from me, howbeit in vain do they worship me, teaching for Doctrines the Commandments of Men.* Now here is no mention made, of their rendring the 5th Commandment of none Effect, through their Traditions, that follows after; and therefore it is idle to think, that our Lord spoke only

only of such Traditions as were directly opposite to express Commands. The next Words shew, what sort of Commandments of Men our Lord speaks against; *For laying aside the Commandment of God, ye hold the Tradition of Men, as the washing of Pots and Cups, &c.* So that if the Doctor would really say any thing to the Purpose, he should set us down some express Command of God in the Scripture which was contradicted by their Tradition, concerning the washing of Hands, Pots, Cups, &c.

Again, *Christ rebukes the Jews for teaching such their Traditions for Doctrines; that is, making them of equal Obligation and Necessity with the Commandments of God.*

I am very sensible what Stress the *Jews* laid upon their own Traditions; but the Question is now only, Whether that Matter be intended in the Text? And whether the Doctor has given us a good Gloss upon those Words, *Teaching for Doctrines*? But unless his Word may pass for a clear Proof, I can see no Reason for this Interpretation. In my Apprehension, there is very good Sense in our Lord's Discourse, if it be thus understood; "The Doctrines, the Rules, and Directions, which you give for the worshipping and honouring God, are the meer Commandments of Men; they are such things as God has no where prescrib'd, and which therefore do not please him, but are vain and unprofitable. And let the Reader consider, whether this does not exactly agree with the Sense of the Prophet, from whom our Lord cites this Passage, *Isa. 29. 13. And your Fear towards me, is taught by the Precept of Men.* So that if the Doctor thinks God is Serv'd and Honour'd by these humane Ordinances in Dispute, I can't see but that (however angry and uncharitable he is towards the Dissenters) he is in perfect Charity, and at a full Agreement with the judicious and learned *Scribes* and *Pharisees*.

The Doctor gives us a good Hint of an Objection; *viz. If these Things are not of equal Obligation and Necessity with the Commands of God, why are they so much insisted upon, and why are they not alter'd, and taken away, that so the Dissenters may join Communion with us?* The Doctor answers, That the *Rulers of our Church are Spiritual Fathers, and the Dissenters are so many untoward Children, that refuse due Obedience, without any good Ground.* And therefore he thinks, the Children (and not the Fathers) should comply. In answer to which learned Comparison, I say, There may be untoward Fathers as well as Children. And if Children are arriv'd to the full Use of their own Understanding, (the want of which, is the great Reason why they are to be guided by that of their Parents, during their Minority) they are oblig'd to consider of the Reason and Justice of the Commands of a Parent: And when they see he goes beyond his Power in commanding, and question the Lawfulness of the thing commanded, they are not to obey. And to use the Doctor's Comparison, If a Father en-

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joins a thing, which he owns to be needless, and the Child professes that he judges it sinful, and therefore desires to be left to his Liberty, he would be an untoward Father with a witness, in the Judgment of all the World, who nevertheless persisted in commanding it.

But the Doctor tells us, *This is a meer Sham or Pretence : For, (says he) I desire to know what Dissenters will be gain'd to the Church by this Method alone ? We must take away not only Ceremonies, but also the Sacraments, before the Quaker will join with us — Infant Baptism, before the Anabaptist will join with us — Your whole Order of Bishops, before the Presbyterian and Independent will join with us.*

As to any Institutions of Christ, they are not to be taken away : And therefore no body expects the Quakers should join with the Church of England, or any other set of Christians, while they continue Quakers. Nor is Infant Baptism to be taken away to gain the Anabaptists : Tho' I own their Opinion alone would not hinder me from holding Communion with them ; But as to the other two, I can't think their joyning is impossible. If Churches were reduc'd to their Primitive Size, and Subscriptions in dubious Matters were not requir'd, and pretended indifferent Matters were left indifferent, and Presbyters were allow'd their due Share in the Government of the Church, our Difference would not long remain any thing near so wide as it is at present. I wonder whether the Doctor thinks King Charles the 2d's Declaration took away the whole Order of Bishops ? Or whether he does not know that the Presbyterians were thankful for it ? If the thing it self be so impracticable, why did the Bishops declare it to King James the 2d, that they were ready to come to a Temper with reference to the Dissenters ? Or why did the Church-men promise this to the Dissenters in the time of their Distress ? Or why did so many famous Church-men draw up Alterations for this end in the Jerusalem Chamber ? Upon this I can't but take Notice of what Mr. Calamy says, That " such Amendments as those were, with such an Allowance *Abridgment,*
" in the Point of Orders for Ordination by Presbyters, *p. 655.*
" as is made, 13 Eliz. Cap. 12. would in all Probability have brought in two Thirds of the Dissenters in England.

Obj. 2. Is from Col. 2. 18, & 23. from whence you are wont to infer, that 'tis unlawful to comply with the Rites and Ceremonies of our Church, because they are so many Acts or Circumstances of Will-worship.

The Dissenters do indeed think, that the Will of God is the Rule of Worship ; and that such Worship as is not according to the Declaration he has given us of his Will, may well be call'd *Will-worship*, and is not pleasing to God. And they own they can't find any thing in the Scriptures to satisfy them, that God requires us to worship him with such Ceremonies as Bowing at the Name of Jesus toward an Altar ; or with the Cross in Baptism, and the like : And this their Opinion is not only ground'd on the word *Will-worship*, but

on other Texts of Scripture, as has been shewn already. It is true, they imagine, they have a very good Argument from this Text, and I verily think the Doctor has said but little in answer to it. He cites two Verses as the Ground of the Objection, and takes Notice only of one, and that not the Chief, where the word Will-worship is. He says, that *the voluntary Humility or Worshipping there spoken against, is that which was paid by some of the ancient Hereticks to Angels, as is plain from the express Words of the Text, Let no Man beguile you of your Reward in a voluntary Humility, and Worshipping of Angels.*

I suppose by these *Ancient Hereticks*, the Doctor means the Gnosticks: But I hardly believe it can be made appear, that the Apostle has any Regard to them here. I can't but think he refers rather to some corrupt Doctrines of the *Jews*, or *Jewish Christians*; to which Purpose I only desire the Context may be observ'd, both which goes before, and which follows after. I am sure *St. Jerom*

* *Vide Epist. ad Algasiam, tom. 3. p. m. 112.*
† *Adv. Marc. lib. 5. p. 614.*

is of this Mind. * I can't certainly say, what is then meant by the *θεουσκεία τῶν ἀγγέλων*, the *Worship or Religion of Angels*, but if the Angels are here spoken of, not as the Objects, but as the Authors of the Worship, † *Tertullian's* Interpretation will not be amiss, when he says, that the Apostle here speaks against those, "Who from Angelical Visions pre-

tended they must abstain from Meats. With whom also agrees a Commentator, to be met with among *St. Jerom's Works*. Perhaps

* *Vol. 2. p. 129.*

this may well agree with those Stories that *Dr. Lightfoot* * speaks of, as frequent in the *Jewish Writings* about their *Bath, Kol*, and the Appearance of *Elias* to their Wise-men; and it may be from such kind of Opinion, that the *Pharisees* chuse to express themselves so, *Acts 23. 9. But if a Spirit or an Angel bath spoken to him, let us not fight against God.* I determine nothing,

Comp. Gal. 18.

but refer it to the Consideration of better Judgments: Only I observe, if this be the true Sense of the Text, it bears a little hard upon *Socrates's* Story of the Original of Cathedral

Lib. 6. cap. 8.

Worship, who tells us, that it arose from *Ignatius*, seeing a Vision of Angels singing Hymns to God in that alternate manner; with whom agrees *Nicephorus Callistus*. * Nor do's it much favour those, who alledge

* *Lib. 13. cap. 8.*

Constantine's Vision of the Cross, in Defence of the Cross in Baptism. But let the Doctor be allow'd to have giv'n us a true Interpretation of the 18th Verse, and let us see whether in the other Verse which he cites in the Objection, but omits in the Answer, there be nothing that deserv'd his Notice. I shall set down the Text at large, *ver 20, Ec. Wherefore if ye be dead with Christ from the Rudiments of the World, why, as though living in the World, are ye subject to Ordinances (Touch nor, tast nor, handle nor, which all are to peri-*

in the using) after the Doctrines and Commandments of Men? Which things have indeed a shew of Wisdom in Will-worship and Humility, and neglecting of the Body, not in any Honour to the satisfying of the Flesh. In which Words the Apostle argues, that Christians should not be subject to such Rules and Precepts as those, *Touch not, Taste not, Handle not*; which were certainly things indifferent in themselves. These Rules he calls Ordinances, after the Commandments and Doctrines of Men; where we have the two Words which are us'd, *Matt. 15. 9.* and indeed Christ's Defence of his Disciples there, is turn'd into a Prohibition (or what is equivalent) here. And as Christ shews, that his Disciples were not bound by the Laws of Men, urg'd by the Scribes and Pharisees, so *St. Paul* shews, that Christians should not obey any such Laws of Men. And this he argues from their being deliver'd from the Ceremonial Yoke by Christ: The Rudiments of the World are certainly the Jewish Ceremonies; compare *Gal. 4. 3, 9.* & *Heb. 9. 1.* And if the Ceremonies, whose Original was of God, are spoken of with Contempt here and else-where, when God no longer requir'd the Use of them; I can't think that those, whose Original is purely of Men, are like to be pleasing to him. Nor can I apprehend, that he who has taken away one Ceremonial Yoke, has authoriz'd un-inspir'd Men to lay another upon the Necks of his Disciples. Again, the Apostle says, these things have a shew of Wisdom in Will-worship. I must own, the Interpreters differ about the word Will-worship, whether it is to be taken in a good or a bad Sense. Some think 'tis to be understood in a good Sense, and that Will-worship signifies the Forwardness and Freeness of their Service; and so they think by a shew of this, and of Humility, they endeavour'd to set off themselves, and to gain Profelytes. Others think it is to be taken in a bad Sense, and that such Worship as is not of Divine Institution, is condemn'd under this Name. And by the way, the chief Objection against this Interpretation, viz. That it is joyn'd with Humility, is easily remov'd, if *St. Jerom's* Interpretation of Humility, in a bad Sense, be allow'd, with whom *Tertullian* seems to agree, in the places mention'd before. But I need not concern my self to determine in which Sense 'tis to be understood; for in either of them it must have a Reference to those Humane Ordinances spoken of before; and if it be understood in a bad Sense, 'tis then plain, that the Apostle condemns those Humane Ordinances under the Name of Will-worship: But if it be taken in a good Sense, he then must be suppos'd to reckon these things to have only a plausible shew of some-what Good, while they were really Bad: And then, tho' the word Will-worship will not support the Objection, yet the Scope of the Apostle and his Argument will sufficiently do it.

The Doctor pretends, That here is no Danger of being guilty of Will-worship, because we are out of bounden Duty to our Rulers, and not

of our own Will and Choice. But this is nothing to the purpose, because the Apostle forbids a Subjection to such Ordinances.

I shall only subjoyn, That we are not the only Persons who object against Will-worship. Bp. Usher tells us, that in the second Commandment is forbidden, "Every Form of Body of Divinity, p. 222. "Worship, tho' of the True God (*Deut.* 12. 31.) "contrary to, or diverse from the Prescript of God's † P. 228. "Word, (*Mat.* 15. 9.) call'd by the Apostle Will-worship, (*Coloss.* 2. 23.) † All Will-worship, where-
"by we make any thing a part of God's Service, which he hath not
"commanded, *Col.* 2. 23. For how great a shew soever it have,
"yet in that it leaneth to Man's Wisdom, 'tis unlawful. In parti-
"cular, — To devise any other Ministry than that which God hath
"Ordain'd, to place Religion in Meat and Drink, *Apparel, Time,*
"*Place, or any other indifferent Thing.*

His 3d and 4th Objections are consider'd in my former Letter.

His 5th Objection against Bishops being call'd Lords Bishops, is what for ought I can find Dissenters rarely alledge, and perhaps never ground it upon the Text cited by the Doctor, *1 Pet.* 5. 3. or at least that it is not the Principal Text they insist on in that Matter.

The Question is, whether those Titles of Honour, and that Interest the Bishops have in Civil Affairs, do's so well suit with their Character and Work, as to deserve to be made inseparable from it. 'Tis very possible, that many Dissenters have thought they do not, as well as many others, and the Doctor is not ignorant, that there are several Ancient Ecclesiastical Canons that favour this Opinion: But I will own to him, that whoever grounds an Objection against the Bishop's Titles upon this Text, do's not argue very strongly, it being thus in the Greek, *not Lording or Domineering* over God's Heritage; that is, not pretending to Rule in an Arbitrary way, and setting up their own Will for a Law, and expecting that People should yield a blind Obedience to all their Decrees, and then the Doctor will do well to consider, whether his Arguments do not, in a great Measure, oppose the Prohibition of the Apostle.

6. I have consider'd the Business of his 6th Objection in my former Letter.

Objection 7th. Proceed we next to the Text urg'd by you for Liberty of Conscience in Religious Matters, to wit, *Gal.* 5. 1. *Stand fast therefore in the Liberty wherewith Christ has made us free?*

Liberty of Conscience (in the common use of that Expression) is hardly argued by any one from that Text. Liberty of Conscience, as it signifies Liberty for a Man to follow the Dictates and Directions of his Conscience in the Worship of God, is not meant by the Liberty there spoken of. This Liberty is founded upon the Law of Nature, and is one of the unalienable Rights of every Good Subject, which no Government can justly deprive him of. But if by Liberty of

of Conscience, the Doctor means only that the Conscience is freed from some Law, (*viz.* the Ceremonial) by which it was oblig'd before; so we confess we do argue from this Text: And we own, this Liberty do's not signifie a *Freedom to do what we will in Religious Matters*; We own our selves under Law to Christ: We allow the Doctor, that it relates to the Yoke of the Levitical Law, but then our not being oblig'd by the Levitical Ceremonial Law, is reckon'd by the Apostle as Liberty, and a Privilege, tho' that Law was of God's own making; and I hope then it will be no great Instance of our Liberty, to come under another Ceremonial Yoke of Man's making. If these old Religious Ceremonies, which God himself Instituted, are stiled a Yoke of Bondage, and beggarly Elements, I confess, I can't have very honourable Thoughts of those new ones, which are of an infinitely less honourable Extract.

As to the other Text brought in here by the Doctor, *1 Thess. 5. 21. Prove all things. I know none that think it gives leave to try and experiment all things.* We say, it requires that Christians should examine the things they hear, and search by the Scriptures, whether they be true or no; and not act by an implicit Faith in any one who pretends to be their Guide: And we say farther, that the last part of the Verse, *bold fast that which is good*; obliges them not to entertain his errors, but only those Truths which he delivers; of which I shall say more under the next Head.

Obj. 8th, Rom. 14. 23. *Whatsoever is not of Faith is Sin:—Whence says the Doctor) you may perhaps argue, that it being not of Faith in you, it is, it being contrary to your Perswasion or Judgment, to join Communion with us; it would therefore be a Sin in you to do it, and consequently for that Reason (if for no other) you ought to abstain from our Communion.* Now I desire you, Neighbour, to consider, that if this Text is so to be understood, you would have it, *viz.* That any Man's private Perswasion (how groundlesssoever) of a thing's being sinful, do's entirely excuse him from doing the thing; then by this Text a Papist, nay a Jew, nay a very Heathen, may justify his manner of Worship, as well as you justify yours by the Separation.

I wonder how the Doctor could fasten such a Sense as this upon the Dissenters: There are none of them who understand this Text as he says. We own that Conscience is it self under Law, and that an erroneous Conscience, when it puts a Man upon omitting a Duty as no Duty, is far from entirely justifying him: He sins in not doing what God has commanded, and in not informing his Conscience better; but yet should he perform a Duty, his Conscience (through mistake) telling him it is a Sin, he would sin too. And it is not peculiar to the Dissenters to hold that Conscience is every Man's immediate Guide, which he is always and in all things to follow. What that dictates to be his Duty he is to do, and what that dictates to be Sin, he is not to do. And as the Dissenters profess their Perswasion and Judgment in these things is wholly grounded upon the Holy Scriptures,

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the Doctor might have omitted this Objection; for when he can convince them, that this Perswasion is groundless, he will find they will make no such Use of the Text. In the mean time, (for I think his Arguments do not abound with Evidence and Strength) while the Perswasion lasts, they can't but look upon themselves bound, by this Text, to follow it. And who is there that doubts whether a Papist &c. do's sin, that changes his Religion, while his erroneous Conscience tells him he should not. The Doctor indeed says, that *these Words were spoken with reference to such Particulars as were not determin'd either by the Scriptures or Governours of the Church, but were left to every one's private Determination.* But this is a Mistake, for St. Paul speaks of the eating of those things which some esteem'd (tho' without sufficient Reason) unclean and unlawful to be eaten; and this Particular was determin'd, as he declares, *ver. 14. I know, and am perswaded by the Lord Jesus, that there is nothing unclean of it self.* What fuller Determination would the Doctor have? And yet he declares, that an erroneous Conscience binds in the next Words; *But to him that esteems any thing unclean, to him it is unclean.* Some things are Lawful, and not Necessary; in doing or not doing these a Man sins not, if he follows the Directions of his Conscience, and observes the Rules of Charity: There are other things that are both Lawful and Necessary, and here, if a Man's Conscience misinforms him, he sins either way, by not doing them, because he obeys not the written Law of God; by doing them, because he follows not the Directions of that which God has appointed to be his immediate Guide. And when the Doctor says, *we ought to submit, and give a Preference to the lawful Authority of the Church, before her own private Perswasions;* he is greatly mistaken: I am never to do so in Matters of Sin and Duty; but am always to follow my own Perswasion; and if I mistake, it is not their Authority, but their Arguments and Reasons must make me submit; and to urge Men, as the Doctor does, has, in my Apprehension, no other tendency than to make them contemn Conscience, (the regard to which should always be sacred and inviolable) and take the ready way to contract the most deplorable Hardness of Heart.

And now I shall look back upon the Doctor's Gloss upon those words *Heb. 13. 17. Submit your selves.* He says, *It is the same, as if the Holy Penman had said thus, Tho' it may sometimes happen, that the Rulers of the Church may enjoin such things, as some Members of the Church may not like in their own Opinions, yet it is the Duty of all such Members of the Church, to submit their Judgments to the Judgments of their Rulers, and to comply with their Injunctions, by an actual and punctual Obedience.*

I suppose by these Words, *May not like in their own Opinions,* he means that they judge them to be sinful, for else it does not reach our Case; and then, I say, this is most pernicious Doctrine. There is nothing more dangerous, than for Persons to enslave their Judgments and

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Opinions to the Dictates of any un-inspir'd Persons, whoever they be: I say, let us put the Case a little lower, that a Person is doubtful about the thing enjoin'd, that tho' he is not fully convinc'd that 'tis a Sin, yet upon the Account of many plausible Reasons and Objections, he is not fully satisfied of the Lawfulness of it, will the Doctor vouch for him, that he must then obey his Rulers, and say, that that Text, *What is not of Faith is Sin*, is nothing to the purpose? Certainly in this Case, a Man is to suspend his Obedience to it. Or again, suppose the Rulers of the Church enjoin any thing (in it self really) indifferent, of which yet a Person questions the Lawfulness, while, at the same time, he is fully satisfy'd, that the Power of Church Rulers does not extend to the imposing such things; is it not clear, that in this Case he is not to comply? The Doctor says, *such a Submission is absolutely necessary to preserve the Churches Peace*. And that I own to be true, just as an absolute Submission to all the lawless Commands of a Tyrant, is absolutely necessary to preserve the Peace of a Kingdom. Without such Submission, there can be no Peace in the Church, where the Rulers will assume such a Power; but when they keep within Bounds, and only teach Men to observe what Christ has commanded, the Peace of the Church will not need such a Support.

Next the Doctor proceeds to our Objections that are not taken from Scripture.

Object. 9. You say then, that the Act of Toleration do's permit you to separate from our Communion, and therefore you may lawfully do it. The Doctor answers, *That 'tis not in the Power of an Act of Parliament, to make that to be a Sin, which God has made sinful.* And this I grant, but deny that God has made our Separation sinful: And as the Doctor refers to his Papers for a Proof, I refer to mine for an Answer. God has never made it sinful for every Church to choose its own Officers, and to order his Worship in the best way they can, according to the Rules of his Word. Nor has the Parliament made it sinful for us to do so, that is, it is now against no Command of either. 'Tis true, in the late Times of Persecution, there were Acts of Parliament which did forbid us to worship God according as we judg'd we ought; and the great Argument then urg'd, was Obedience to the Civil Magistrate; and then his Power in all things, not forbidden in Scripture, was cry'd up, and Submission to it press'd, under pain, not only of Fines, and Imprisonments, &c. but of Damnation. Blessed be God, this Argument from an Act of Parliament (with the many forcible ways of urging it upon us) is now at an end; and we do not hear much of it, and especially from the Doctor, who presses the same Obedience to Church-Rulers. Now when we alledge the Act of Toleration, 'tis upon two Accounts.

1. In answer to any Arguments that are fetch'd from such Acts; and to shew, that the Laws of Magistrates can't now (as formerly) be pretended.

2. We especially urge it upon this Account, because the National Church

Church is perfectly a Creature of the States, which owes its Being Acts of Parliament, and therefore we can't see but the same Power that form'd it, may alter it; and the same Power that was suppos'd to lay an Obligation upon us, is able to take it off. I would fain know whose Institution a National Church is owing to, and whether there could be any such thing without an Act of Parliament? Is it the Parliament that obliges Persons, in such or such a District, to submit to the Bishop of any City in it. It is this that makes, divides or unites Parishes; and therefore I take it for certain, that if an Obligation lies upon me to resort to the Parish Church, or to join with those that are for a National Conformity in Ceremonies, it must be deduc'd ultimately from an Act of Parliament; and by consequence if they have a Power to oblige me to resort to such a Place, or sort of Worship, as I was not bound to before, they have a Power to release me from that Obligation also. Now this is actually the Case, for the Act of Toleration has vacated those former Laws which commanded me to fall in with the National Church, and has left me to my Liberty of worshipping God in any way that I like better; and of choosing a Pastor for my self; and tho' the Doctor thinks it only freed from Civil Penalties; others think, that so far as the Sanctions of Humane Laws cease, so far those Laws themselves do cease also; and that there is now no Act of Parliament that requires any Dissenter to conform to the Church of England.

Object. 10. Our manner of Divine Worship is not so pure as that observ'd in your Dissenting Conventicles. It was thus the Heathens call'd the Assemblies of the Primitive Christians, *Conventicula*: And if the Doctor thinks he follows a good Example, we are not unwilling to undergo the like Reproaches with those noble Persons, upon the account of our Regard to the Institutions of our Lord; and if he takes Pleasure herein, and in the Name he would give us of Fanatical Papists, we envy him not his Pleasure, and shall not retaliate. Our Religion teaches to count ourselves happy in these things, and to esteem them our Honour.

The Doctor says, *this is a down-right Falshood, &c.* but that is discountenanced elsewhere.

Well, but we have, you say, some things, which, tho' they are not forbidden, yet neither are they requir'd by the Scriptures, and therefore these might be left alone, especially since we do not read that the Apostles us'd any such things.

For the Weight of this Objection, I need only refer to what I said elsewhere. The Doctor answers by retorting it upon us, that we have likewise some things of the same nature, as *Pulpits*. I remember, the Doctor in his other Letter, produces a learn'd Argument for reading of Sermons, out of *Jeremy 36. 4, 5, 6.* That *Baruch* wrote from the Mouth of *Jeremiah*, all the Words of the Lord. I think verily I may say with more Reason, alledge in this Case, *Neh. 8. 3.* And *Ezra the Scribe stood upon a Pulpit of Wood, which they had made for the purpose.* But I insist not on it, for this comes within those Circumstances, which are in our

der to the Execution of God's Commands. Our joining in Publick Worship is commanded; in order to this, 'tis necessary that he that officiates should be heard; and for this end, as well as others, 'tis necessary that he should stand higher than the People: But in order to the Execution of which Command is the Cross in Baptism, the Surplice, &c. We think we can see a vast Difference in these things; if the Doctor will not, we can't help it; but only query, whether he be not led by *Fancy, Humour, Perverseness*, and such like Motives, which, from his own Experience, he very readily charges us with.

He asks, *Why it should be less pure to pray or preach in a Surplice, than in a Pulpit.* I answer, The one is convenient and useful, in order to the Execution of a Divine Command, and the other not; but is only grounded upon a Pretence of Decency, when there is no Decency in it.

Object. 11. Is about agreeing with the Papists; of which in my other Letter.

Object. 12. Another great Pretence for your Separation, is that of better edifying? But this is no more than a meer Pretence; for the Word Edifying, do's denote in plain English, the same as building up, and is made use of, on account of the Church of Christ being frequently compar'd in the Scriptures to a Building or House. Now this Building or Church of Christ, being but one, therefore, to be Edify'd, must denote in the strictest and true Sense, being made a Part of that one Building, or a Member of that one Church. And therefore 'tis impossible that any Teacher should edify you, who promotes a Separation, just as 'tis impossible to build up any House by taking the Stones, and other Materials thereof, and putting them into different Parcels, instead of uniting or putting them together, whereby alone they can be built up into an House.

I answer, 1. The Doctor takes that for granted, which my Charity will not suffer me readily to grant him, viz. That 'tis impossible that Christians, who from their differing Sentiments separate from one another, should both be in the one Catholick Church. My Charity will not suffer me to entertain such black Thoughts of the Case of all Conformists, as this Principle would (if allow'd) constrain me to.

'Tis to me no hard thing to imagine, that Men of different Communions, may yet both agree in the Faith, which is necessary in order to their being united to Christ, by virtue of which Union to him, as their Head, the whole Church is one. And nothing tends to beget more unworthy Thoughts of God, than to represent him, as oblig'd to reject and damn all those in this Nation, who separate from the Church of *England*, meerly from a fear of displeasing him, while at the same time they believe all

the Doctrines, and obey all the Rules of the Gospel. I can't suffer such a disparaging Thought of God, and his Goodness, once to enter into my Mind : But I conclude, that as in every Nation, so in every Party of Christians, he that fears God, and worketh Righteousness, is accepted of him.

And while the Doctor is so free in his Discourse of this Nature, he seems to me to be liable to a just Application of that Scripture, which he unjustly in another Place applies to us, *Psal.* 50. 21. *Thou thoughtest I was altogether such an one as thy self;* that is, he seems to think, God has no more Clemency and Mercy than himself. I have sometimes wonder'd, how Men of the Doctor's High Principles, can make their Notions consist, I mean the more favourable Opinions they entertain generally of the Papists, while they own theirs a true Church, and hold, that a Man may be sav'd in it, and yet deny Salvation to the poor Dissenters. And yet, if I mistake not, the Separation ought to be as wide between the Church of Rome and them, as between them and us : But let the Doctor think as he pleases, while we can approve our selves to God, we neither value nor fear Man's Judgment.

We are well satisfy'd we belong to that Church of which Christ is the Head, and are not mov'd by the Narrowness of such as measure the Unity or Extent of Christ's Church by a pitiful Uniformity in Humane Ordinances.

And let the Doctor look to it, that he be not mistaken, least if he be, he should meet with the same Measure in Judgment wherewith he now judges us ; and when Dissenters come to be acquitted, he should be judg'd out of his own Mouth, and according to his own unmerciful Principle.

2. We utterly disown the Charge and Guilt of the Separation, and say, it wholly belongs to the Conformists, who either laid a Design of forcing us to Separate, (as appears by the Speeches of some, and the Practices of others in 1662.) or, who fell in with those that had such a Design. They have all either assum'd or submitted to such a Power as Christ has not left in his Church, and do insist upon such Terms of Communion, as they own are unnecessary, and as they know, we think unlawful.

3. As to the Doctor's Notion of Edifying, we know very well that it signifies building up, and do add farther, that 'tis us'd Metaphorically for improving Persons in Knowledge, Faith, Holiness, &c. And as the Church is one Spiritual House, so is every true Christian a Temple of the Holy Ghost, and therefore the Scripture speaks of Edifying particular Christians, such as were already actually made parts of that one Spiritual House, or Members of that one Church ; to which purpose are these places

of

of Scripture, *Rom.* 14. 19. & 19. 2. *I Cor.* 8. 1. & 14. 4, 17.
1 Thess. 5. 11. *Ephef.* 4. 29.

Nay, this Word is us'd so generally for Instructing and Teaching, that 'tis once us'd when it can have no possible Relation to the Unity of the Church at all, it being us'd in a bad Sense, *1 Cor.* 8. 10. Shall not the Conscience of him that is weak be emboldned (in the *Greek* 'tis *Edify'd*) to eat those things that are offer'd to Idols? In short, according to the general Sense of this Word in the Scripture, a Man is Edified when he improves in Spiritual Knowledge in Faith, Love to God and Men, &c. And this being the greatest thing a Christian has to look after, he is bound to use those Means he finds most conducive thereunto; and to dissuade him from this, is to put him upon doing the worst Wrong to his own Soul: And a serious Christian will be able to discern whether the Means he uses, Edifie him or no.

It will not signifie much to Dispute, whether the Establish'd Worship, or that of the Dissenters is most Edifying; No doubt the Doctor thinks so of the Establish'd, as I do of the Dissenters Worship; and after all, *this* must be left to the Judgment of particular Christians.

I will only add, with Reference to what he says afterwards of the Devil's Delusions, that he that finds himself to become more acquainted with the Will of God, more inflam'd with Love to God, and more quickned to a zealous Care and Endeavour to obey God in all things, &c. by the Ministry he sits under on either side, may be assur'd that the Devil has no Hand in this, but that that Ministry is truly edifying to him, by the Blessing of God upon it.

Obj. 13. *You can't but think your Teacher to be a true Minister of Christ, because he is a good Liver, and preaches the Truths of the Gospel.* There are more things than one or two that must evidence a Man a Minister of Christ. That these are two Necessary Qualifications, we are sure from *Ti.* 1. 6, 9.

I have in my other Letter consider'd the Validity of the Mission of the Dissenting Ministers; and if that stand good, and they appear to have these and such like Qualifications, it will not be in the Power of the Doctor to disannul their Ministry.

But, says the Doctor, *Then every good Liver is a true Minister of Christ,* (but he knows that is not made an Evidence alone) and consequently you your self must be a true Minister in the same Sense your Teacher is; Namely, as a good Liver signifies a good Moral Man, (*viz.* a good Moral Man, that believes in Christ, that loves God, and keeps his Commandments) but if by a good Liver he meant a good Christian, then neither you nor your Teacher can be

allow'd to be such, forasmuch as you wilfully and industriously abet and promote what is most strictly forbidden by Christianity, I mean Division in the Church.

We stand not to the Doctor's Allowances; what has he to do to judge another's Servants, who stand or fall to their own Master? But the Doctor is like sooner, by his discovery of his want of Charity (the very Breath and Soul of Christianity, and vastly more essential to it than Obedience to Humane Ceremonies) to blast the Reputation of his own than of our Christianity. But farther, where is the Wilfulness we are charg'd with, who profess, that 'tis out of a Sense of Duty to God that we do as we do? I should think the Doctor does rather *wilfully and industriously abet and promote Division*, while he professedly pleads against those things that might end it: And therefore let him think seriously of that Text, *Rom. 2. 1. Therefore thou art inexcusable, O Man, whosoever thou art that judgest: for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thy self; for thou that judgest, dost the same things.*

As to the other Particular, *Preaching the Truths of the Gospel*, he says, *The Dissenting Teachers preach up some, and preach down other Truths, and encourage Division*, (but enough of that already) and that *this is the common way of Cheats, to put off their bad Wares, by putting some good among them.* And this is an Insinuation with which the Reputation of any Minister whatever may be blasted. There is no tolerable Plea the Doctor has for this his base Suggestion: We hope he will take our Word, that our only Motive is a Fear of God, and a Desire to keep his Commandments; The Doctor expects his Neighbour should take his word in the like Case, and we demand the same of him: As to his long Harangue that follows, it has nothing of Argument in it; let but the Reader put in the Conformist instead of the Dissenting Teachers, and suppose the Charge to be brought against them for the Separation, and he will see it will serve us as well as him.

Obj. 14. Is taken from the bad Lives of some of our Ministers, as if they were for that Reason not the Ministers of Christ; the Weakness of which Objection I might shew at large, by proving, that a Man may be a very bad Man, and yet a true Minister, particularly from the Instance of Judas; as also by retorting the Objection on your own Party; forasmuch as there are to be found among your Teachers, as bad Livers as among our Ministers.

To which I answer; 1. That 'tis very true, that a bad Man may not discover himself by his Actions what he is, and so long Charity obliges me to judge well of him: And so he, who has all other Qualifications, but that of true Holiness, so long

as he does not discover himself by his Actions to be wicked, is to be judg'd in Charity a Minister of Christ: But when he shews himself to be wicked, he is no longer to be acknowledg'd a good Man, and much less a Minister of Christ; and it is so far from being a Duty, that 'tis errant Folly to commit the Care of my Soul to him, who plainly evidences that he takes no Care at all of his own.

2. The Case is widely different between the Dissenting Congregations and the Parish-Churches; forasmuch as any Dissenting Congregation may at Pleasure free themselves from any wicked Minister, whereas it is quite otherwise in the Parish-Churches: And therefore sober Men of the Establish'd Communion have complain'd of it.

3. I own this is only an Objection in such places where the Ministers are bad Livers, but 'tis a good one if true, let them be on which side they will: The People are oblig'd to separate from such. But as I delight not in Reproaches, I shall only add, that a bad Life is a more clear Evidence of a false Prophet, than what he talks of in the foregoing Page; I mean a Separation on the account of those things in Dispute.

Obj. 15. *You are (tho' not in Communion, yet) in Charity with us: And as a Token of such your Charity, you do not scruple now and then (as occasion requires) to come to our Publick Service. Neighbour, as to this Practice of your Party, commonly call'd Occasional Conformity, it is so far from justifying your Separation, or lessening your Crime therein, that on the contrary, it renders it most inexcusable; For by such Occasional Conformity you plainly own, that there is nothing in our Publick Service, but what you can joyn with us in, if you will, and therefore your not coming to our Publick Service constantly, must proceed from no better Motive than Willfulness or Obstinacy, at least, not out of a conscientious Fear of sinning thereby.*

To which I answer, 1. That if the Doctor's uncharitable Principle were true, that in all Church-Divisions on one side or other, Persons must be no Christians, his Argument would be good. But this is a Principle which he knows we deny, and which is indeed wide from the Truth: Tho' we think the Blame of our Divisions lies entirely on the Conformists side, yet we dare not judge after this rate of our Brethren. And whatever the Doctor may think of our Charity herein, we doubt not but sober Men, who think freely, will own it a Vertue.

2. These Occasional Conformists do look upon themselves bound in Conscience to have their stated Communion with the Dissenting Ministers, notwithstanding their Charity. They think it very evident, that they have all the necessary Qualifications of the Ministers of Christ. And that they were very unjustly thrown

thrown out of their Places in 1662. and that when those Terms were impos'd, all Ministers ought to have refus'd them, and consequently that the Dissenting Ministers are the most rightful Pastors of the Church, to which all the Christians of this Nation are bound statedly to join themselves: And if Ministers and People had both acted thus, as they ought to have done, there had been no Separation at all. But then,

3. They think, that tho' this be the true State of the Case, they are not bound to condemn or unchristian all those who think otherwise. They believe that sincere Christians, and true Ministers of Christ, might be of different Opinions, and therefore they do not see why they may not esteem them as Christians, and hold Communion with them as such upon occasion, tho in these Extra-essential things they judge them in the wrong; and think they are bound to a fixed ordinary Communion with the other side. And wthal they say,

4. That they do not herein do any thing which they apprehend sinful according to the Scriptures, or that can be reasonably concluded such from their professed Principles.

5. There are many things in the National Establishment, which have been generally confess'd by themselves to be amiss, and to need a Reformation. And such a Reformation was long call'd for by the Puritans, while they continued in the Church, and by the Dissenters since: But nothing of this Nature can be obtain'd, but such Motions have been always reject'd, and are professedly by many oppos'd; and therefore the Dissenters can't but look on themselves as bound to attempt that Reformation among themselves, which they can't expect in the Constitution. 6. 'Tis very possible, a Man may think it lawful to join in some Parts of the Establish'd Worship, and unlawful to join in others; he may think it lawful to take the Sacrament Kneeling, and yet unlawful to have his Child baptiz'd with the Sign of the Cross. And yet I suppose all will grant, that a Man's fix'd Communion should be where he judges he can without Sin have the free Use of both Sacraments. So that a Man's occasional Conformity in one Particular, can't reasonably be interpreted, an owning that *there is nothing in the Publick Service, but what he can join in if he will.*

7. There is no Obligation that lies upon them to such a constant Communion as is urg'd by the Doctor. If Acts of Parliament did now (as they do not) require this of us, what Evidence can be given, that God has lodg'd Ecclesiastical Government in a Magistrate? No such thing can be infer'd from the New Testament, or from the Original Contract, the Foundation of all Civil Power. If the Power of a Convocation, to make Laws for a National Church, be urg'd, What Evidence is there

that Christ who instituted no such kind of Church) ever appointed any such governing Power? What Evidence that all Christian Churches, who have a Power left them within themselves, are oblig'd to submit to the Decrees of such an unequal Representation? Or, in fine, if the Command of the Bishop in whose Diocess I live, be urg'd, what Evidence can be given of my Obligation to acknowledge him for my Pastor or Bishop, whom the Prince shall appoint? Or what good Reason can there be, that I should look upon him as the Person whom I am to obey and submit to, as set over me by God to watch for my Soul, to whom I am a perfect Stranger, and like always it may be so to remain.

These things ought to be clear'd, and the Authority that obliges Persons to be of the Establish'd Communion, be made out by good Scripture Evidence, which I am satisfied the Doctor has not yet done. It may perhaps be said, that by their own Practice, and by an Occasional Submission, these Persons do acknowledge the Authority that enjoins the Established Worship, and therefore are bound to a constant joining with it. But the Answer to that is easie, for their Practice shews plainly, that they do not acknowledge any such Authority as is pretended, and their stated Dissent is an avowing the contrary. By their Occasional Communion therefore, they do testify their Charity in an Action which they do judge lawful; and by their more ordinary and fix'd Communion with the Dissenters, they do protest against the imposing Power, which is so very pernicious and prejudicial to the Christian Religion in this Nation.

Next the Doctor proceeds to the other Part of the Objection, of Dissenters *being in Charity*, tho not in constant Communion with the Conformists. And this he endeavours to answer, and the old Story of Obedience to Bishops Returns, which need not be again consider'd.

The Doctor will do well to answer another Objection; and that is, that he himself is not in Charity with the Dissenters. But he adds, *I must earnestly beg you, to allow your self due time for an impartial Examination of your own Heart, whether you may not possibly deceive your self, whilst you think you are in Charity with us.* This is not a very hard Question to determine. A Man may know whether he believes those that differ from him are good Christians, and whether he does truly love all such. The Doctor openly professes that he has no such Charity as this for us: But I can assure him, that 'tis very possible for a Dissenter to be of this Disposition toward Church-men; and I make no doubt, but many Church-men, (of a better Spirit than the Doctor) are of the same Disposition towards us.

He adds, *that there is too much Ground to suppose that you may possibly be thus deceived, you your self must acknowledge, if you are not altogether ignorant, what manner of Charity your Presbyterian Brethren, in the late great Rebellion between 1640 and 1660. shew'd to the Episcopal Party in this Kingdom.*

In answer to which, it ought to be consider'd, what was the Behaviour of the Episcopal Party before 1640. 'Tis notorious with what a high hand they carried it towards us, they persecuted us with an implacable Malice, and were endeavouring to bring this Nation under the vilest Slavery, both Civil and Religious. And when the Nation became sensible of their Danger, and began to contend for the Civil Rights, it can't be wondred at, that those who were unjustly oppress'd, should take part with those who oppos'd the Oppressors. What was it they suffer'd from the Presbyterians, in comparison of what they suffer'd from them between 1662. and 1668? Were they incapable of Living meerly for their being Episcopal? Or were there any Hardships put upon them, like those of the *Oxford 5 Mile Act*? Had the Dissenters been only depriv'd of their Livings in 1662. Had they not been depriv'd of the most sacred Rights of Subjects, and been continually harass'd, fin'd, imprison'd, and restrain'd upon, and that very much at the Instigation of the Clergy; had they not endur'd such a Series of bitter Reproaches and Calumnies, built on many notorious Forgeries, the Doctor might with some Face have mention'd these former Times. But since the Episcopal Party have so abundantly repaid them to the utmost, whatever Hardships they can pretend to have suffer'd at their Hands, in Modesty he ought to have omitted this; *Not to mention the extraordinary Charity shewn at this very present, by your Brethren to the Episcopal Party, in a Kingdom not remote.* To which I answer, that this Reflection is more unreasonable than the former, in as much as the Barbarities us'd towards the Presbyterians in that Kingdom, did vastly exceed those which were suffer'd by their Brethren in *England*. The Thumkins, Boot, and open Murders, without so much as a Form of Justice, practis'd in that Nation, strike a Man at the very thought of them with Horror: And what is it that the Episcopal Party suffer there, who are not depriv'd of Liberty of Conscience? 'Tis too plain, that a Jacobite Design is at the bottom of that Noise and Clamour which has lately been made in this Nation about *Scotland*; but as the B—p of S—m has clear'd this Matter in his Speech in the House of Lords, I shall content my self with setting down his Account of the Matter, taking it out of the Annals of Queen *Anne's* Reign, for the Year 1705. p. 206. He said, "That as to the Scots Affairs, he was particularly acquainted with them, and
" therefore

" therefore would venture to speak with the more Assurance :
 " That the Scots Kirk's being establish'd without a Toleration,
 " was an unfair Allegation ; for there needed no Law for Tole-
 " ration, where there was no Law to inhibit. The Episcopari-
 " ans were not forbid to worship God their own Way, being on-
 " ly excluded from Livings ; and that there was at that time
 " fourteen Episcopal Meeting-houses in *Edinburgh*, as open as
 " the Churches, and as freely resorted to ; in several of which
 " the English Liturgy was us'd ; but, that in several of them
 " the Queen was not pray'd for. And the Bill for giving Pa-
 " trons Liberty of conferring their Benefices on Clerks Episco-
 " pally Ordain'd, had pass'd (at least the King had allow'd it)
 " if they would have put in a Clause to oblige them to take the
 " Oath to the Government, but upon the offering that Clause,
 " the Person that solicited it, let it drop.

Obj. 16. *You mean well, and would fain do the best : He an-
 swers, Any Papist, or any other misguided Person will say the same :
 And may not I say the same to any Church-man that pretends to
 this, as I suppose they do : And if the Doctor thinks this is our
 last Refuge, and that we are forc'd to flee to this when all our
 other Arguments are answered, he is much mistaken ; We need
 no such Shift as this, nor is this any Objection of our making,
 but a fancy of the Doctor's, which he thought would serve hand-
 somely to bring up the Rear of his vain Triumph. Where Men
 make such a Profession (as all honest Men must be suppos'd to
 do it on both sides) and do not plainly contradict it, they are to
 be believed, and that should cause contending Parties to have
 more Charity than what the Doctor expresses in the next Words,
*viz. And you must remember, that tho God will undoubtedly make
 Allowances for Uprightness of Intention, where use has been made of
 all due Means prescribed by God for understanding the Truth, yet this
 can't be look'd upon to be your Case, who refuse to make use of the Or-
 dinary Means appointed by God for your Instruction ; because you re-
 fuse to be guided by your Parish-Minister, whom God has appointed to
 guide you in all Points of Difficulty.**

But, 1. How does it appear that God has appointed the Parish-Minister to be my Guide ?

2. Who is to be Judge, which are Points of Difficulty ? Must I
 take the Parish-Minister's Word for that, as well as for the Resolu-
 tion ? What can the Papists desire more ? Suppose a Man
 should have Recourse to the Doctor, (as his Parish- Page 43.
 Minister) or to his Writings, which the Doctor thinks
 better, and consults him upon the Point of Conformity, and
 having consider'd his Reasons, finds them weak and trifling,

must he be guided by him, in spite of his own Judgment, that he is in the wrong?

The Doctor mistakes, when he goes about to persuade the Dissenters to an implicit Faith, and blind Obedience; they are very much disposed to see with their own Eyes, and to believe no Doctrine any farther than they see the Proof of it, and to own no Authority without some good Reason to convince them of the Rightfulness of it. And as to the Sincerity of our Intentions, we warn the Doctor that he would leave that to God to judge of; 'tis a nice Point, and requires a more discerning, calm, and impartial Judgment to search into it than the Doctor is Master of. Let him remember that he is a fallible Creature, liable to mistake in Judging, and therefore let him beware of rash judging the Secrets of Men, and their eternal States. For tho' an unrighteous Judgment makes no Alteration in the Case of those who are judg'd, yet the Consequence of it (being so desperately mischievous to the Persons themselves, who take upon them to judge and condemn their Neighbours) should be more awfully thought of by the Doctor than it seems to be.

God forbid I should judge any Man, who professes to believe, and do all that is requir'd in order to Salvation, and does not contradict his Profession by a wicked Life. Such a Man, let him be Presbyterian, Independent, Episcopal, or Anabaptist, shall be sincerely lov'd and honour'd by me, and with all such I always profess a Readiness to hold Communion, so it may be done with the Omission of doubtful Disputations.

I have now gone over his Objections, except those that are peculiar to himself, and of them, and his Conclusion, I shall not need to speak, because they do not at all affect the Cause of the Dissenters.

I shall only take a View of his Postscript, where there is no want of Malice and bitter Zeal, but the Doctor is so kind as to qualify it with an Antidote that will prevent our receiving any hurt by it, I mean the superabundant Silliness and Weakness of it.

1. Then he gives us a Specimen of the Disagreement between the Dissenters Principles and Practices.

I have spoken to the two first of his Instances in my other Letter: His 3d Instance is, That it is the Dissenters Principle, that *kneeling at the Sacrament is not to be allow'd of, as being Popish and Superstitious*; and for their Practice he tells us, *that the Dissenters do, notwithstanding, kneel at the Sacrament, in order to qualify themselves for Places or Offices*: Than which nothing can be more ridiculous. How easie were it to retort this on the Churchmen, by comparing one Church-man with another, or the same

Men

Men with themselves ; namely their Principles about Obedience to the Prince, and their Practice directly opposite to it.

But I ask whether this Learned Doctor does not know that the Dissenters are not all of one Mind in this Matter ? Or, do's he know that the same Men hold that Principle, and yet act in a direct Opposition to it ? He knows, all those that receive the Sacrament kneeling, do say, they do not judge it unlawful so to do ; and the other Sort of Dissenters, who think kneeling at the Sacrament Unlawful, are such as never communicate with the Church. The Gentlemen in the House of Commons, who contended so earnestly for the Occasional Bill, yet took Notice of this ; and it might seem strange the Doctor should overlook it, were it not that he shews himself resolv'd to venture at any thing, so he may but reproach and villifie the Dissenters.

In this 4th Instance, he sets down this as our Principle, *'Tis Superstitious and Popish to adorn Churches, or make them fine and Beautiful:* And our Practice he represents, that *several Meeting-Houses of the Dissenters, of late Years erected, are, notwithstanding, built much more stately and fine, than most of our Parish-Churches.* I am a perfect Stranger to this Principle of the Dissenters, which the Doctor talks of, as may be seen by a Passage in my former Letter wrote before I read this. The Dissenters do indeed judge it unlawful to adorn places of Worship with Pictures and Crucifixes ; and I suppose the Doctor can't charge them with any thing like this : But as to the height of the Building, it is certainly a very great Convenience and Advantage to the People, who meet in it, upon more Accounts than one : And I know none who think that 'tis Superstitious or Popish to have the Place of Worship decent and handsome, tho' they judge that where the Circumstances of a People will not reach to what is desirable, they may, nevertheless, acceptably worship God. And herein the Conformists must be suppos'd to agree with them : For as they have their stately Cathedrals, so they have some Parish-Churches which are sufficiently Mean, and which being only Thatch'd, might in Reason check the Humour of some People, that despise the Dissenters Worship upon that Account. But if this be the Principle of any Dissenters, I will freely disown it, and declare, I am so far from it, that I wish the Dissenters had as Fine and beautiful Places of Worship in every Town in *England*, as those the Doctor speaks of, which have been Erected of late Years.

His other Instance I have spoken of before.

2. Next he gives us a Specimen of the *Agreement between some Principles and Practices of the Dissenters and Papists.*

1. *The Papists make it their Business to seduce and draw off the People from the Communion of the Church of England. The Dissenters make it their Business to do the very same.*

This is admirably Profound ! The Papists would draw Men one way, and the Dissenters would draw them quite the contrary, and therefore there must be a marvellous Consent and Agreement between them : All Parties think themselves in the right ; and like to have others of their Mind. But I would ask the Doctor whether he do's not think, that the Papists are as willing to seduce Persons from the Communion of the Dissenters, and whether there be not therefore as perfect an Agreement in this Matter between them and the Church of England ? And how easily could I run the Parallel as far as the Doctor has done, if fond of Writing such silly Postscripts. The Papists and the Churchmen agree in seducing Men, and drawing them from the Dissenters to Diocesan Episcopacy, to Forms of Prayer, to bowing toward the Altar, and at the Name of Jesus, to kneeling at the Sacrament, and the Use of the Cross in Baptism ; and the Papists use some of the same Methods with the Doctor ; Urge an implicit Faith in Church-Guides, endeavour to fright People into their Communion, by impudently damning all those that separate from them, &c.

His 2d, 3d and 4th Instances I have already consider'd.

5. *The Papists pretend to Miracles and Extraordinary Gifts, and that their chief Guide, the Pope, is inspired, or more immediately assisted and directed by the Spirit. The Dissenters likewise pretend, that their Teachers are more spiritually gifted than our Episcopal Clergy, and that their Guides are (many, if not all of them) inspired, or more immediately assisted and directed by the Spirit.*

Poor trifling ! The Papists pretend to Miracles and extraordinary Gifts ; Do the Dissenters pretend to any such thing ? What are the Miracles they boast of ? Do's the Doctor think the Assistance of God's Spirit a thing extraordinary in the Christian Church ? Is it not what every sincere Christian certainly has ? Is it not sure that if any Man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of Christ's ? Rom. 8. 9. The Dissenters do indeed pray for the Assistance of the Spirit, and hope they enjoy a Measure of it, according to the Assurance which Christ has given us, *That our Heavenly Father will give his Holy Spirit to those that ask him*, Luke 11. 13. And they have the Charity to think this is not peculiar to themselves. The Papists indeed do pretend that the Pope is inspir'd, or more immediately assisted and directed by the Spirit : But do they not pretend that he is render'd hereby infallible ? Did they only pretend to his being immediately assisted as other Christians are, (who may not

notwithstanding err) who would deny it, supposing he appear'd to be a good Christian? But why do's the Doctor say the Dissenters pretend their Guides are inspir'd? Is that a Word which they ever apply to themselves? Or do they pretend to that Infallibility which Inspiration (in the common Sense of the Word) do's carry along with it? Do they pretend to impose any thing they say upon the People on this Score? Do they not openly declare and avow to their Hearers, that they are no farther to be believed, than as what they say is contain'd in the Scripture, or by just Consequence deduc'd from it? If Inspiration be taken only in a lax Sense, for the Assistance of the Spirit, the Dissenters know that the Church-men pretend to it as well as themselves. I would fain else understand the 13th Article; " Works done before the Grace of Christ, and the Inspiration of the Spirit, are not pleasant to God. Or the Collect for the 5th Sunday after *Easter*; " O Lord, from whom all good things do come, grant to us, thy humble Servants, that by thy holy Inspiration we may think those things that be good, &c.

Or if the Doctor pretends to nothing of this, I would fain know how he could answer the Question propounded to him when he was made a Deacon? When the Bishop ask'd him, Do you trust that you are *inwardly mov'd by the Holy Ghost*, to take upon you this Office? How could he answer, *I trust so*? I know no Dissenters that carry the Matter higher than this. It follows,

Whence arises N. B. one remarkable Difference between the Dissenters and Papists. The Papists acknowledge but one (viz. the chief) of their spiritual Guides to be inspir'd, or more immediately assisted and directed by the Spirit, and him they call the Pope. The Dissenters pretend that many (if not all) of their spiritual Guides are inspir'd, or more immediately assisted and directed by the Spirit, and so have among them many Popes.

Does the Doctor believe what he says to be true? If he does, he ought to understand our Opinion better, before he writes against us, and not rashly charge us with what we positively deny, in the same Sense that the Church-men do. For I doubt not but they will own, that notwithstanding God gives his Spirit to Christians in general, yet there are some special Promises of Christ's Presence made to Ministers, upon which they may depend, not only in that Work which is common to them and other Christians, but in that which is peculiarly theirs, I mean the Discharge of the Ministerial Function. And therefore it is too plain, the Doctor has here taken part with the great Accuser.

I can't but commend to the Doctor this Caution, as a Friend, that he would beware of bantering about the Work of the Spirit: 'Tis too serious a Matter to be thus ridicul'd: And I am fully perswaded, that the Neglect of this Caution will never be of Service to his Cause. For they who know how necessary the Assistance of the Spirit is, and make this the matter of their earnest and daily Prayer to God, will be very apt to suspect (in spite of all his Arguments) that he that can turn the Assistance of God's Spirit into a Banter, does some way or other *quench the Spirit*.

Since it thus appears from the foregoing Specimen; that all the Adversaries of the Church of England promote the same common End, viz. Popery, and that by many the same common Artifices; it ought therefore to be duly consider'd, whether they may not all be very properly comprehended under the general Name of Papists? and so be sub-distinguish'd into Roman Catholick Papists on the one hand; and on the other hand, into fanatical Papists, otherwise call'd Dissenters.

I would fain know of the Doctor, why he is offended with the Dissenters, when they accuse the Conformists as symbolizing with the Papists, and yet is so free to brand them as Papists? And what distinctive Point of Popery do they maintain? I cannot think of one thing, wherein the Conformists differ from the Papists, wherein the Dissenters do not differ from them also; and there are some things more, wherein they differ from them both. So that they must be reputed and nam'd Papists, not because they are less, but more opposite and contrary to the Papists than some of their Neighbours: So that to imitate the Doctor in his way of Discourse in other Places;

P. 40. & p. 38.
Of his other
Letter.

the reason why we must be call'd *Papists*, is, because we are not *Papists*. And his Addition of *Fanatical*, is as absurd and ridiculous as the other. We own not one Notion about the Influence of the Spirit, which we are not able to confirm by the Articles, Liturgy, &c. of the Church of England, as well as by the Scriptures.

As a Farewell, the Doctor tells us, That *we are taking the right and most ready way to bring in Popery.*

In answer to which I say, 1. That we are very sensible that our Divisions are an Advantage to the Papists, who would otherwise never have been so zealous to divide us, or made use of such Tools to screw Matters to the utmost height in 1662. in order to the dividing of us. They knew for certain, that such Terms being impos'd, there must of necessity a Division ensue and Popish Counsels were at the bottom of all the Severities

us'd against us. And it will be to the perpetual Reproach of those that were concern'd in those Affairs in 1662. that they did (for ought appears) wilfully and industriously cause a Division, which any one might see, could serve no other than a Popish Interest.

2. 'Tis too plain who are now most serviceable to the Popish Cause, even those who are united in Counsels with them, as the Jacobites and High Church-men actually are : and that in Opposition to the Dissenters and Moderate Church-men. And there is evidently more Danger from the Opposition of the High Church against the Moderate Church-men, than from any Disagreement between them and the Dissenters : And it is the Union of these two that has kept out Popery, which had otherwise overflow'd this Nation.

3. 'Tis in the Power of the Church to end the Division (in a great measure at least) and so to remove the Danger that arises from it. Or it is rather in the Power of the Parliament, to remove those things that keep the Breach wide open ; but the loud Noise, and empty Clamour of the High Part of the Clergy, hinder it. So that whatever the Advantage be which the Papists gain by our Divisions, it is wholly chargeable on the Conformists side. For,

4. We are not able on our side to end the Division. We are heartily sorry, not only that the Papists may reap Advantages hereby, but for many other Mischiefs that are owing to the same Cause. But we cannot part with our Consciences to keep out Popery ; nor must we do Evil, that Good may come of it.

And thus, Sir, I have consider'd the Doctor's Arguments against us, which I am well satisfy'd, are not like to do us half the Mischief, which from his own Uncharitableness (without Repentance) is like to accrue to himself. That God would therefore give him true Repentance, shall be sincerely my Prayer for him ; and therein, I doubt not, your Religion and Inclination will engage you to join with,

SIR, Yours, &c.

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D E F E N C E
O F T H E
R E M A R K S
O N
Dr. Wells's
L E T T E R
T O
Mr. D O W L E Y.

P A R T I.

Being an Answer to the First PART
of the Doctor's Examination.

In a Third L E T T E R to a Friend.

The Second Edition.

By James Peirce.

L O N D O N,
Printed by *J. Humfreys*, for *John Lawrence*,
at the *Angel* in the *Poultry*. 1711.



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S I R,

I Cannot but think it proper to address this my Defence to you, as you are the Person who left the Doctor's Letter with me; and as you are easily able to judge by Circumstances, of the Truth of some Matters of Fact, which I am forc'd to alledge in my own Vindication. And in the first Place I beg your Patience, while I clear my self of some Reflections, which the Examiner is pleas'd to cast upon me.

He reflects then on me, for saying, *I thought his Arguments were such as deserv'd no Answer*, Exam. p. 4. But the Reason why I said so, is obvious; The Dissenters are in abundance of things unfairly represented: Opinions, which they do not own, are first obtruded upon them, and then gravely confuted: And this I not only said, but shew'd in particular Instances. And the Doctor may easily bring this Matter to a speedy Issue; Let him but try whether the Dissenters about him will allow his or mine to be a true Account of their Opinions; and, I hope, they may be here consider'd as the most proper Judges. And I think the Doctor can have no reason to be offended at me for using these Words, since he pretends to have learn'd his Objections from some of his Parishioners, Exam. p. 14, 15. Now to help him to form an impartial Judgment concerning this, let him but suppose his own Party us'd in the like manner; let him but suppose a Dissenter to take the same Method, and to make it his Business to rake together such trifling Objections, as the common People in the Church of *England* are ready to make against the Dissenters; and let him suppose this Dissenter to have only a small measure of that Talent, which the Doctor shews himself by his Examination a great Master of, (I mean an Ability to shuffle, to wind, and turn things, and set a specious, but false, Gloss on them) and that he uses this to work out of these Church-men the most silly Objections; and afterwards, by a mighty Strength of Argument, confutes them; and then triumphs that he has quite overthrown the Church-mens Cause: Would any Man of Judgment and Candour think the Cause of the Church concern'd; or that such kind of Writings deserv'd an Answer? I am confident they would not: And therefore I

leave it to any indifferent Judgment, whether I had not equal Reason to think and speak as I did. As to *my second Thoughts, and resolving to bestow some Remarks on the Doctor's Letter*, I do still declare, that they were not owing to any Apprehensions I had of the Strength of the Doctor's Arguments, but only to the mighty Boastings wherewith his Letter was dispers'd up and down the Kingdom, as an unanswerable Confutation of the Dissenters Principles in general. Had the Doctor's Letter been only dispers'd among his own Parishioners, from whom he pretends to have learnt his Objections; had they not been dispers'd in that way I have now mention'd, I should not have troubled my self about an Answer. He is pleas'd to say, *his Arguments, such as they be, have cost me a considerable time to bestow even such sort of Remarks as I have bestow'd upon them*. How considerable the time spent in writing those Remarks was, the Doctor can't tell; but if 'twill be any Satisfaction to him to know, I will sincerely inform him. I had them under Consideration only 15 Days; and I had other Business to mind too in that time; and after that I only corrected the Copy of a Friend, who was so kind as to transcribe it for the Press; and one Reason of his transcribing it, I shall give presently. The Doctor's Charge against Mr. Dowley, as not *sticking at a manifest Untruth, in asserting that there is not room for the Dissenters to write so freely and fully in their Case, as the Matter would lead them, and as their Adversaries may against them, and alledging the Penal Laws*, is not built on any certain Grounds. 'Tis enough for me to assure the Doctor, that I have known a Dissenter brought into a great deal of Trouble by the Laws still in force, for speaking freely his Mind since the Act of Toleration, concerning the Common-Prayer; and never heard of any ones being in Trouble for speaking against Conceiv'd Prayer. And whether Mr. Dowley's Sentiments concerning the Common-Prayer are such as would expose him to Trouble, should he openly declare them, I can't tell; but Charity directs us to believe Mens Integrity when they declare their Judgments, unless we have manifest Reason to the contrary. For my own part, I was under no manner of Apprehensions on that Account; and I was so far from being aware of that unhappy Consequence the Doctor talks of, that I really knew nothing at all of the Matter; and had never heard of Mr. D's Excuse; and afterwards purposely, (till the Doctor now in his Examination referr'd to them) avoided so much as the reading of those Letters, as having no Inclination to be concern'd in Personal Controversies; as I was told by others, those Letters were much of that kind. And if any have represented what the Doctor alledges, as the Reason why I conceal'd

conceal'd my Name, it has been utterly without my Knowledge, and against my Approbation.

The Doctor is as much out in his other Guesſes, viz. *That I am aſham'd to own what I have writ*; as, I ſuppoſe, I now convince him by the Addition of my Name; which I judg'd then, as I do ſtill, an inconfiderable Trifle, which ſignify'd nothing in a Controverſy; for it matters not who writes, but what is written. Tho' I don't think he would be willing the ſame Gueſs ſhould take place in parallel Caſes: Will he allow us to judge, that all their Writers againſt us, who have not put their Names to their Writings, were aſham'd to own what they had written? Will he ſay ſo of Mr. Hoadly, who publiſh'd an Answer to Mr. N. Taylor without his Name? Or of the London Caſes, ſome of which were (I think) firſt publiſh'd without the Author's Names? But if that had been my Reason, I could eaſily have prevented the publiſhing of my Papers, when they were written; and indeed ſhould have done ſo: But I aſſure the Doctor, that I am not now aſham'd to own, and publickly defend them: I am willing to give the Doctor all the Satisfaction he can reaſonably deſire; and therefore, tho' this relates not to the Controverſy, ſhall tell him my Reason, and ſo eaſe him of the Trouble of any farther Surmizes, and needleſs Gueſſes. I have always thought our Differences were not ſuch as ſhould hinder a Brotherly Love, and Friendly Correſpondence between us; and have been ambitious of maintaining a free Converſation, with Sober, Ingenious, and Pious Miniſters of the Eſtabliſh'd Church; and have been ſo happy as to meet with ſeveral ſuch, who, notwithstanding our differing Sentiments, appear'd very cordial to me; as I knew my ſelf to be toward them. And this I ſpeak of as an Advantage, for which I deſire to bleſs God. Now I thought, a publick appearing in this Controverſy (with how much Modeſty and Charity ſoever 'twere manag'd) might raiſe Prejudices, and make thoſe whole Converſation I valu'd, backward to it; and therefore did not prefix my Name to the Remarks; and (however it has been ſince diſcover'd) did all I could to conceal it, ſending my Papers not in my own Hand-writing, and entruſting but one Friend in London with the Secret, deſiring him to keep it as ſuch.

The Doctor represents me, p. 6. *As appearing as the Champion of our Cauſe*; and no doubt his Reason is, becauſe he looks on himſelf as the Champion of the Eſtabliſh'd Cauſe; how he could otherwiſe ground that Reflection, I can't imagine; for no Man can juſtly be ſaid to aſſume the Character of a Champion, by his entering the Liſts with any other than a noted Champion: And as I have no ſuch Opinion of the Doctor in this Controverſy,

verly, so I am far, I assure him, from any such Conceit of my self, which would be a great Disparagement to my Brethren, among whom I pretend not to make a considerable Figure: And tho' he says, *p. 59. he will be so civil, as to suppose me the fittest and ablest Person my Party could make choice of to defend their Cause;* yet I can assure him, that no Person whatever did make Choice of me, or so much as ask me to answer him: But the Truth of the Matter is this, in which I may appeal to you, Sir, as you know what I am about to say to be true: When you were pleas'd to make me a Visit, you brought the Doctor's Letter with you, intending to read it while you were here; and when I accidentally look'd into it, and ask'd you about it, you gave me that Account; which, I said, induc'd me to write an Answer to it: I confess, I thought my self (upon a slight View of some Passages then, and once a considerable time before in the Book-seller's Shop) able to give a full Answer to it: And accordingly, when you were just going away (without any Motion on your Part then, or before) I desir'd you to leave the Doctor's Letter with me, telling you, I design'd to draw up an Answer to it.

Another thing the Doctor objects, is, *The Greatness of the Price of my Remarks;* and is course enough in his Reflections: In short, he thinks he may raise the Reputation of his own Generosity, by representing his Adversary as sordid: And therefore he says, *He propos'd to himself no other Recompence for his Pains, than some Books to give away; but I kept one Eye on my Temporal Good, and would be well paid for my Pains; and this made the Remarks dear.* I profess I do not fear to compare my Generosity in this Matter with the Doctor's; I assure him, I receiv'd not one Farthing for my Copy; nor did I article for so much as the Doctor owns he had, *viz. Some Books:* On the contrary, the Bookseller insisted on it to my Friend (to whom I sent the Copy) that we should be oblig'd to take off a considerable Number. He did indeed afterwards, of his own Motion, send me some Copies, when I neither ask'd nor expected them. The true Reason of the Difference of the Price, was the Fewness of the Copies which were printed, which made the Charge of setting the Press fall the heavier on each of them. I was sorry when I found the Price so large; and 'twas on my Motion the 2d Edition of that Letter, as also of my other Letter, were printed so as to be sold cheaper; and that before I imagin'd I should hear of this Objection from the Doctor. And when he adds, *That I knew full well, and, no doubt, by frequent Experience, how very easy a Matter 'twould be to gull or chouse the Common People;* I don't think that such Rudeness deserves any other Answer, than
that

that 'tis very unworthy of a Man of polite Education, and much more of a Clergy-man of the Doctor's Degree.

It becomes nor a Divine to slander his Adversary; and especially one to whose Person and Character he is wholly a Stranger. And I defy the Doctor to alledge any Colour of Proof for what he says. I know very well he charges me, P. 59. with stiling him *an insulting and scornful Adversary*; But whether the Charge be just or no, I am willing to leave to any impartial Judge, who has read his Writings. And as to the Reproach of *barbarous Incivilities*, they are not my Words, but Arch-Bishop Tillotson's; and are no further applicable to the Doctor, than as it may appear from what I have alledg'd to prove it, that he does scurrilously make sport with our Religious Service. And I wish that Rudeness of Expression were not to be parallel'd in his own Writings. I said, *I hop'd the Cause of the Doctor's unfair Dealing with us, was not Wilfulness, but rather such Weakness and Ignorance, as tho' it render'd him unfit to write in the Controversy, yet might lessen his Guilt.*

Now this I lay down for certain, that the Doctor has misrepresented us: And I may here alledge his own Testimony to prove it, that since he says 'twas given out by our Party, that the Remarks were not to be answer'd, P. 7. Our Party, even such of them from whom the Doctor pretends to have learn'd his Objections, did judge their Principles more fairly represented by me than by him. And tho' I have been assur'd of the Satisfaction of several in that matter; yet I never heard the least Complaint against me from any Dissenter, as tho' I had misrepresented them. But now supposing this true, it was Charity in me to hope the cause was Weakness rather than Wilfulness, especially since I then did not know the Doctor would esteem it a piece of Civility, to suspect a Man's Sincerity and Ingenuity, rather than his Knowledge in Church-Affairs, p. 55. And what was the Weakness or Ignorance there charitably suppos'd? Not Unskillfulness in any famous part of Learning, Languages, Philosophy, Antient History, or Divinity, &c. but only in the Principles and Opinions of a despis'd sort of People in this Nation, who are represented as being only led by Humour, Fancy, Interest, Perverseness, and such like Motives; and consequently whose Principles a wise Man would not desire to know.

Another Objection is, that I use Equivocations; that I shuffle; and this returns continually: But I declare I can't understand any occasion I have had for any such thing. I have not found myself hitherto reduc'd to any Straits by the Doctor's Arguments: And moreover, tho' I am well satisfy'd in the Grounds of my present Nonconformity, yet if I may judge by what I have observ'd

serv'd as to others, or what I have met with my self, I can have no reason to fear Conviction of the Lawfulness of conforming to the Establish'd Church, and accepting a better Living than I have among the Dissenters. I do declare I designed fairly to represent the Dissenters Opinions; and therefore us'd a manifest Caution, where I express any Opinion, wherein they do not agree among themselves, and where I express only my own Sentiments: And I know not any one Place where I have done otherwise; I am sure there is no wilful Omission of that Nature. But I think any considerate Reader will easily discern the reason of all the Noise and Pother the Doctor makes about shuffling. He seems resolv'd to use such Arts as his principal Weapons; and therefore by making this stir, would prepare the Reader to believe, when he comes to be tax'd with it himself, 'tis only by way of Retaliation. I shall clear my self of this Charge as I go along; and take notice how continually 'tis practis'd by the Doctor.

But only now I shall give a general Representation of the Doctor's Management of this Controversy, that so the Reader may judge of his Expertness in the Art of Shuffling.

The Doctor prints a Letter to Mr. D. a dissenting Teacher of the Presbyterian or Independent Perswasion; and therein he lays down the Characters of a false Teacher, *to undeceive him and his Followers; and to convince both of their unhappy State and Condition*, p. 5. And for this end he lays down eleven Instances of false Doctrine, which are sufficient to prove him that teaches them, a false Teacher: And when he has done, he tells Mr. D. *These, Sir, are the several Instances of false Doctrines spread abroad, and taught by the false Teachers of these Times, which I judg'd most proper to lay here together before you.* And now who would not hence conclude, the Doctor design'd to charge all those false Doctrines as taught by Mr. D. and such as agreed with him? Whereas now, when he is charged with the Abuse, he pretends, *he did not directly charge any of the eleven Instances on Mr. D. or any dissenting Teacher.* He only said, *whoever teaches so and so, is a false Teacher.* He owns, *if he had actually charg'd Mr. D. &c. with teaching such Doctrines, and he had not taught them, he had been truly guilty of misrepresenting them.* Exam. p. 15. Now if this is not all shuffle, I know not what is. For my own part, I can assure the Doctor, *I was so quick-sighted as to observe this*; but I could not believe any Man would use such a mean way of writing: For what is then the Sum Total of all the Doctor's Arguments but this, that he (an *Individuum Vagum* perhaps in the World in the Moon, or directly under the North Pole) who teaches these Doctrines, is a false Teacher: And at this rate here's a Book wrote without any design at all. But farther, I think what I have refer'd to, does

does evidently prove the Doctor did intend Mr. D. as teaching these false Doctrines : And I add, that as it is but reasonable, from the beginning of his Letter, to understand these two Characters to belong to the same sort of Persons ; so 'tis most evident by the last, he aim'd at Mr. D. and the Dissenters in general.

Again, these false Doctrines are pick'd up here and there from Common People ; though there are none of them who now own them ; and thence, without first enquiring of Mr. D. privately, a Charge is openly form'd against us. These are such Instances of Shuffling, and foul dealing, as the Doctor shall have no Reason to charge on me.

I am sorry I have been oblig'd to be so large on such Matters, which are foreign to the Controversy. Let us now come neerer to the Controversy.

I had said, that *some of his Eleven Instances are such as the Dissenters do not Teach, and in others he represents not fairly their Sense.* This (he says) gives him just Occasion to make an unlucky Remark, that this is the same Artifice or Shift made use of by the late Popish Writers, p. 8. But this Remark is not so unlucky, as 'tis inconsiderable : For if this signifies any thing, then no Persons however Misrepresented must complain of it : But I assure the Doctor, I am not so much afraid of Symbolizing with the Papists, as that would come to. If they roundly deny'd the Opinions truly charg'd on them, may not we therefore roundly deny those *falsely* charg'd on us ? I will add, that the Protestant Writers prov'd by Writings, acknowledg'd by themselves to be Authentick, that such and such Doctrines were held by the Church of Rome, and did not pick them up from the private Conversation of two or three Farmers or Tradesmen.

In the next place, he thinks me *under a gross Mistake, when I say these Instances are so far from being Essential to Religion, that a Man does not deserve to be reputed a false Teacher for the sake of them, and his Reason is, because they are the Occasions of drawing Men into Schism.* But that I deny, the Schism lies not on our side ; and therefore accordingly I must judge the Doctor for his Notions, which lead him to Schism, a false Teacher.

As to what he says concerning their *Differences among themselves*, I shall only put him in mind of these two things : 1. That there may be Schism, where there is no Separation, as is plain by the Case of the Church of *Corinth*. And let any Man judge, whether the different Opinions and Interests of High-Church and Low-Church, and the Contentions and Animosities between these two Parties, will not amount to as much as that for which the Apostle charges the *Corinthians* with Schism : And consequently, whether according to his own Scheme, a considerable

part of the Church of *England*, on one side or other, must not be charg'd as False Teachers, for such False Opinions as they hold.

2. I would desire the Doctor to speak out next time, and say plainly, whether he has the same Apprehensions of the Case of the Non-juring Schismatics which he has of ours? And to inform me, why Men of his Principles are observed to be ordinarily so Mild and Gentle toward them? As to what follows, I will not dispute with the Doctor by what Name he shall call us, he may use his Liberty: Teachers is as good a Name as Ministers, *Ephes. 4. 11.* But I wonder why he should alledge that *the Dissenters call the Church-Ministers (and not their own) Priests.* I believe this is not the ordinary Dialect of any Dissenters beside the Quakers, who indifferently apply it to the Church-men and others. If any others do it by way of Reproach, I do not justify them; tho' 'tis odd, the Doctor should complain of that Title the Church-men themselves are so fond of. I shall not take notice of the things he triumphs in as granted by me. I still stand to them, and say they are nothing to the Controversie in hand. What I have laid down as the Opinion of the Dissenters, they will not deny. And I offer to furnish the Doctor with an hundred more such Concessions, if he desires them, rare Matter for such glorious Postscripts as he has added to this Examination. I confess I thought the former ones sufficiently trifling, but I must own in this last, the Doctor has outdone himself: And if he goes on to improve after this rate, he will in a little time bring the Art of Trifling to Perfection. He may next time take all the Actions of *Euclid*, and such as this, three and two make five, and set them down as own'd by the Remarker, for the Conviction of the Dissenters, if any are found so weak as to deny them.

I come now to the Apology the Doctor makes for himself, p. 14. in opposition to what I had said, that *he had mistaken, or misrepresented the Dissenters.*

1. He says, *I use the Popish Trick of Equivocation, for I must mean all the Dissenters, or some.* If I meant the Generality of them, that's enough for me. Such kind of general Expressions are us'd in like Cases by all; and again, he says, *they must be such as he Wrote to, and was principally concern'd with, or such as he was not concern'd with.* I observ'd before, the Letter was spread abroad as a Confutation of the Dissenters in General, and therefore I might well understand the Doctor, as I did, designing a Representation of their Principles, and however I perceive plainly, those he is concern'd with, do look on my Letter as a truer Representation of their Principles than the Doctor's.

2. As to what the Doctor says, *that he suppos'd the Common People took not up those Notions of themselves, but receiv'd them from others, and Originally from their Teacher*; I ask the Doctor, will he stand to the like Conclusion, drawn from all the weak Objections of the Common People of the Church of England? However it had been but fair, first, privately to enquire whether such Opinions were held, before a Publick Charge was made.

3. He says, *He had expressly caution'd the Reader, that tho' he us'd for shortness the Word Teach, yet he would have thereby understood not only Teaching professedly and openly in any Publick Assembly, but also any other Method whatsoever, made use of to intimate or make known that such Principles are approv'd, &c.*

To which I answer, That in this Sense of Teaching, I deny some of the Doctor's Assertions to be taught by the Dissenters, and say in others, he has not fairly represented their Sense, but only set down a part of what they teach. And as to the Question he propounds to me, it would have been handsome had he first purg'd himself, and openly declar'd himself innocent of any such Dealing with his own People, with regard to the Dissenters. But however I'll answer his Question; that for my own part, I approve not of Bitterness, or Uncharitableness on either side; and tho' it may be true in this Case what Mr. Chillingworth said concerning Protestants and Papists,

Iliacos intra muros peccatur, & Extra.

Yet I can say, I have often taken Occasion to correct the Mistakes I have met with in our Common People, and have vindicated the Church of England from Charges which I took to be unjust.

4. He says, *If he has mistaken the Dissenters, yet I have let drop enough to excuse him, as when I say, the Dissenters do not think a Form of Prayer absolutely unlawful, and add that I speak of the Generality of the Dissenters; and some few weak Persons in any Party are not to be made the Standard.* He asks then, *Since there are such, how do I know, but it is his Misfortune to deal with some of them.* Very well, let it be so. I have given up such, as Persons whose Cause I do not undertake, and in whose Opinion the Cause of the Dissenters is not concern'd. And the Doctor ought most expressly to have laid in such a Caution, and not to have left Scope to his Readers to think he spoke of Dissenters in General. Again, *I own indeed there is some Diversity of Opinions among the Dissenters, concerning the two Ways of Praying.* And what then? Because they are not all fully of one Mind, but some have

have more Latitude than others, must Opinions be obtruded upon the Generality of them, which they do not hold? Again, I said it is one receiv'd Principle among the Dissenters, that no Man, or Body of Men, are the Standard of Truth. And is not this the receiv'd Opinion of Protestants in General? Will this be enough to excuse the Papists in wild and extravagant Charges on the Protestants in General, drawn from what was held by the *Munsterians*, or by the *Socinians*, &c.

As to his 5th Observation, I easily perceive his Design. But however, I spake as I did, because I know the Parliament does not always Tax the Dissenting Ministers for their Salaries: And I commend Mr. D. for not paying, when there was no Authority by Act of Parliament to demand it. 'Tis one of the Privileges of *English* Subjects, not to have Taxes Levied on them but by Act of Parliament? And a Privilege 'tis, worth contending for. And I dare say, Mr. D. and his Brethren do no otherwise refuse to pay.

I shall now proceed to his Instances, and go over what he says in the Order he first put them.

His first Instance is about *Kneeling at Prayer*, and here I granted him what he desir'd, and yet he is not satisfy'd. He says, I apply it only to Family and Closet Prayer, and conceal the Drift of his Assertion, which is concerning Publick Prayer in the Church, and hereupon taxes me as not acting fairly and openly. But he is much mistaken. I own'd the Doctor's Conclusion without any Distinction; and what I added of Family or Closet Prayer was by way of Proof, which is of this nature. If the Dissenters thought Kneeling an unsuitable Posture, they would never use it: But they do sometimes use it; Therefore they do not think it unlawful. Besides the next Words give a Reason why, notwithstanding this, they do not use it in Publick: Not that they think it in Publick a Piece of Superstition, but that they are satisfy'd of the Lawful Use of Standing; here any one may see I mean in Publick Assemblies, where alone I suppose that Posture Ordinarily us'd by them; and so when I add, that Kneeling is not absolutely Necessary, I plainly suppose it Lawful. Nay, I lay the Practice of Standing (which is evidently in Publick) on its being most Convenient, as in our Assemblies I judge it really is; and that's enough to justify us in Standing, since we can by Scripture justify the Suitableness of it. I added, the Church-men, as well as Dissenters, judge both proper, and act accordingly. Does not the Doctor discern I here mean in Publick, it being ordinary for them to stand at the Prayer before Sermon? I know therefore of no Superstition in this Matter, if it be only pretended according to the Doctor, as very suitable and proper; and if a greater

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Necessity is not contended for than the thing will bear. And so, I hope, I have fully satisfy'd the Doctor on this Head.

His 2d Instance is, *about Forms of Prayer*. Here to the Doctor it seems very odd and preposterous, that after I had said, the Dissenters don't think praying by a Form unacceptable, when so and so qualify'd; I should subjoin immediately, that they do not think a Form of Prayer absolutely unlawful. And here he enlarges copiously on a Mistake, which is easily rectify'd: Tho' I own a Form of Prayer, attended with those Qualifications, will not be unacceptable, yet I think the Use of a Form may in some Cases be unlawful; as in this Case, Suppose a Man finds that a Form of Prayer (let it be in private, for we are speaking now only in general) proves an Hinderance instead of an Help to his Devotion: And therefore, as may be seen in that Place, I commend Forms, as Helps to those who can't do without them. And when the Doctor thinks, I can't rid my self of the Force of his Arguments, perhaps he is not mistaken; but the Reason is, because there is no Force in them. For what tho' I grant the Use of Forms may be acceptable, yet still the Question remains, Whether the constant Use of a Form (where such Helps are not needed) does not hinder the Devotional Part?

He says, *I'm mistaken, when I say the same Reasons will hold for the Use of Conceiv'd Prayer* (I said as to the Person that officiates) *in publick as do in private. For there are Remedies to help the Inconveniences of Conceiv'd Prayer, which may be properly enough made use of in private, but are very improper to be us'd in publick; and he refers me to Bishop Wilkins, Chap. 4. of the Gift of Prayer.* I own those Pauses the Bishop speaks of, as allowable in private, are not so in publick Prayer; but the Question is, whether there are not sufficient Remedies without such Pauses in Conceiv'd Prayer in publick. I think the Bishop in that Chapter is of my Mind, that there are: And his whole Book is a noble Proof of it.

I had said, the Dissenters generally agree, that as to themselves they find Conceiv'd Prayer does more engage their Attention to the Business they are about.

The Doctor proposes, *P. 21. closely to consider this Matter; and distinguishes these three Parts in Prayer; The Matter, the Words, and the Devotion; which Distinction I do not disapprove.* He says, *the last of these is the Chief; and that I grant also.* To the Doctor then, it seems to amount to a Demonstration, that by how much the less the Soul is taken up in attending to the two former, by so much the more may it attend to the 3d and last: And therefore he argues, *When Matter and Words are prepar'd before-hand, the Soul is left wholly to attend to the devotional Part.*

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But the Doctor has not fully consider'd the Difficulty which we urge, *viz.* that we are liable to have our Minds careless in the Duty it self, and not to be duly intent upon it; but our Thoughts are prone to wander from it: And therefore, as without Attention there can be no Devotion; so that which is a means to help us in our Attention, is certainly serviceable to promote our Devotion. And that conceiv'd Prayer is a means to engage our Attention, we know by our own Experience. Again, as the devotional is the hardest, as well as the chief part of Prayer, and our Minds are backward to that; the not using constantly the same Form of Words, serves for a Help to that, in as much as the same thing continually repeated by us does by degrees become less moving and affecting; (as we may experience also in abundance of other Instances) and hence the Soul is apt to become formal in the Duty it self, and to take up with the external and less principal part of it; an Evil which we are very liable to fall into.

If the Church-men do not find it thus, I rejoice in it: But as they take, so they ought to give the Dissenters Liberty to judge as they find. I own this is a Failing in us; (the same things ought to affect us always according to their real Weight and Importance.) But, I think, 'tis such a Failing as we shall never wholly get rid of in this World. And as the Dissenters are free to acknowledge this Weakness in themselves, so they judge it very lawful to use the most proper Means to redress it. Now that conceiv'd Prayer is useful this way, seems to me next to Demonstration from what I have said. For whereas the Soul has more scope to wander, while the Words of a Form are said by Rote, or read out of a Book; there seems to be a kind of Necessity of its being more fix'd, and intent on the Business of Prayer, when a Person prays without a Form.

And I doubt not but that a Person, attending to the Directions given by Bishop *Wilkins*, will not find the Difficulty about the Matter and the Words of Prayer very great; but the other Difficulty of wandring Thoughts is not so easily cured. And as to those who join with the Person officiating, I can't see but that as their not knowing beforehand, the Prayers they are to join with, will serve very much to engage their Attention, so this will not infer their being more taken up in attending to the inferior Parts of Prayer; since if the Words us'd are apt and proper, they immediately convey the Speaker's Thoughts to the Minds of the Hearers, and are without difficulty join'd with by them. These things I had taken notice of before, tho' the Doctor does not, but puts the Matter on another foot.

The Doctor thinks *Forms of Prayer afford other Helps, which conceive'd*

conceiv'd Prayers do not, as that in reading a Prayer the Eye may be kept from wand'ring it self, and so from diverting the Mind. Whereas in conceiv'd Prayer there is nothing for the Eye to fix upon, &c. But this avails very little, since 'tis most certain the Eye may be very well employ'd in conceiv'd Prayer, without either wand'ring, or (according to his other Supposition) being shut. I mean so as our Lord's was, *John 17. 1. These Words spake Jesus, and lift up his Eyes to Heaven, and said, Father, &c.* And I think this full as proper as fixing the Eyes on a Book, and much more adapted and serviceable to Devotion. His next Consideration is answer'd already. As to his Third Consideration, I own my express Words (taken strictly) do indeed set both Ways of Praying on a Level, but 'tis plain by the whole Sentence, that I us'd a soft Expression, and any one may see I intended more than is fully express'd; which is a figurative way of Speech common in all Authors, as well as the Holy Scriptures. To this Purpose I speak of our Desires as the Chief Things in Prayer, and of God's looking most to the Heart: But I will set down the Expression at large, and leave any Man to judge whether it be not plain.

They add too, that as our Desires are the Chief Things in our Prayers, they think they may as well lead as follow our Words; and that 'tis as proper when we have to do with God, who looks most at our Hearts in that Duty, that it should be out of the Abundance of our Hearts, that our Mouths should utter the Words wherewith we clothe our Requests, as that our Hearts should desire out of the Abundance of the Words that are put into our Mouths. Letter 1. p. 7. The Doctor does not deny that 'tis most proper for our Desires to lead our Words, and therefore contends they may do so in both Minister and People, when a Form is us'd. But here he leaves out what I mention'd before, viz. That tho' they may, 'tis hard, by reason of the Indisposition of our Minds, to make them do so, and there is more Scope for wand'ring Thoughts in the constant Use of the same Form, than in Conceiv'd Prayer. And as to the People, tho' 'tis true the Words do lead their Desires, yet the same Indisposition is then help'd another Way, as I have alledg'd in the Remarks: For if this be a Help to him that Officiates, and his visible Disposition has an Influence on his Auditory, (which latter is not deny'd) then 'tis evident here is a Remedy us'd against that Indisposition, upon which I argue. And further I there add, that the Auditory's not knowing before-hand the Prayers that are offer'd, is a Means to engage their Attention, and to help against the Evil mention'd before, p. 8. So that if I had certainly known before-hand what the Doctor would object, I do not see how in so few Words I could have express'd my self more fully, or have better prevented any Objections.

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My last Argument (he says) *is that no Forms of Prayer can be so contriv'd as to reach all Cases :* Now here the Doctor charges me with *Sophistry, &c.* Whereas there is nothing more plain than what I there say. My Words design'd to express the Sense of the Dissenters, are these ; *There is good Reason for the Use of Conceiv'd Prayer, because no Form can be so contriv'd as to reach all Cases.* Which the Candid and Judicious Reader will easily discern not to be an Argument absolutely against Forms, but only to shew the Necessity of Conceiv'd Prayer, supposing Forms are us'd. And let the Reader judge, whether his quite altering the Sense of my Words, and leaving out that, which would have discover'd my Sense, is any other than *Sophistry.*

Further, my Meaning is, that such Cases may occur in a Congregation, or in Publick Affairs, as could not be foreseen by the Composers of a Form of Prayer, and which yet are very proper to be taken notice of in Prayer. I will be so free as to put one. We felt some few Years since a most dreadful Judgment of God, I mean the great Storm, by which God did, no doubt, call us to Repentance. This happen'd on a *Saturday.* I ask then whether 'twas not proper on the next Day in our Solemn Assemblies to take notice of this, and to humble our selves under the Mighty Hand of God, and to deprecate such fore Instances of his Displeasure. This was not then neglected by such as us'd Conceiv'd Prayer, which could reach such a Case, but there was no Form prepar'd for our Brethren till some time afterwards. Now I can't see that there is any known Case, (and of such only I speak) which Conceiv'd Prayer won't reach, but many such I can imagine which Forms can't be suppos'd prepar'd for. And therefore I laid down that as a Reason, why Conceiv'd Prayer must be allow'd, in opposition to some who are very stiff against any Use of it. I have consulted the Place he refers to in his Answer to Mr. D. and can't find any thing further in it that concerns me.

Next he falls hard on me, p. 24, & 25, for saying, *and withal the Dissenters do not think the Form impos'd the most exactly suited to answer it's End.* This was us'd by me as a mild Expression, and such as I thought would least irritate and provoke those, who are most fond of it. But the Doctor turns it on me, and asks, *What's this to the Merits of the Cause ? Whether or no I do not know 'tis not requir'd of us to esteem it so ?* He says, *the true Question is, Whether it be such as may lawfully and unscrupulously be comply'd with ?* How far the Declaration requir'd of unfeign'd Assent and Consent to all, and every thing contain'd and prescrib'd in and by the Book, &c. will extend, and whether it does not reach further than what he is willing to allow, need not be determin'd by me. For the Power of imposing Forms is not as yet made out.

out: I confess, supposing that Power well clear'd, lesser Defects would not be a sufficient Objection against the Use of it: But this is not the Case, and there are other things which necessitate our Separation. And since 'tis so, we can't but think we do prudently to order our Worship in the best manner we can. I own much is to be done for Peace, but where it can't be had, the most proper Methods are to be us'd to attain the End of Ordinances, tho' they should be displeasing to those, who refuse to be at Peace with us on just and reasonable Terms. As to his Testimonies, he knows they may be oppos'd with contrary ones, but I do not see this will carry any Cause. As to what he next suggests; there is no need I should pretend any exquisite Exactness on our side. I wish the want of that were the only thing I saw Cause to complain of on theirs. I shall only say, that as to the Dissenters in general, and my self in particular, did we not think the Worship of God better managed among us, we might easily have mended the Matter long ago, by using the Liturgy, or any part of it: We are under no Ties to the contrary, and so may be suppos'd as free, (at least) in our Judgments, as those who have declar'd their unfeign'd Assent and Consent, and bound themselves to the constant Use of it, to whom 'tis now a Point of Honour to defend it. And further, tho' our Prayers are not Printed, they are publickly offer'd, and are esteem'd as most proper to answer the Ends of Prayer by those who joyn with us, and may be suppos'd to know them better than those that never heard them. And tho' I would not boast, yet I may say this, that I liv'd some Years among such as were forward enough to Criticize, and had often such for my Occasional Hearers, but never heard of a single Sentence in Prayer that was carp'd at by them, and yet I am nevertheless free to own, that I have not that Volubility of Speech, and Easiness to express my self which many have. And thus I have gone over again the Dissenters Sense of this Matter, and I hope fully clear'd it from all Objections: Now we are again to consider the Doctor's Arguments, and how he vindicates them.

1. In Opposition to what he had said of Forms of Prayer prescrib'd in the Old Testament, there was this modest Expression us'd, that *'tis dubious whether there be any such Form of Publick Prayer, (strictly so call'd) prescrib'd in the Old Testament.* The Doctor desires to know by what Name those Forms, Numb. 6. 23. and Deuteronomy 21. 7, 8. are to be strictly call'd, if not Forms of Publick Prayer. The first of these I had expressly in view when I wrote those Words, and can't but wonder the Doctor should alledge it. I say 'tis to be call'd a Form of Blessing: And this I conceive somewhat different from Prayer: And indeed the very Words

of the Text do plainly lead us to acknowledge a difference : For a Prayer is offer'd up to God, and he that Prays speaks to him, but this is a Form of Speaking to the People, v. 23. On this wise shall ye bless the Children of Israel, saying unto them. So that herein they were not the Mouth of the People to God, but the Mouth of God to the People. God Authorizing the Priests to pronounce his People Blessed, or such as he would Bless. To which Purpose is v. 27. *And they shall put my Name on the Children of Israel, and I will bless them.* As to his other Instance, I can't see 'twill overthrow what I said, it was a Form only in a particular Case, not prescrib'd to be us'd by the Priests, whom God had chosen to minister to him, but by the Elders of a single City, not in a Congregation Assembled for the Solemn, Publick and Stated Worship of God, but rather on a Political Account, to purge themselves of having had any hand in shedding innocent Blood. And if these are the best Texts the Doctor can bring, I think I may safely next time speak with less Caution.

I had said, Secondly, That if there were such Forms of God's prescribing, 'twould not signifie much in our present Controversie : Because the Question is not whether God, but whether Man has a Power to impose Forms of Prayer : And the latter could not be inferr'd from the former. But the Doctor thinks it may be inferr'd thus : (1.) From God's prescribing them, it appears that they are not unlawful in their own nature. (2.) It appears further that they are useful, forasmuch as God always acts for wise Ends, and uses most proper Means. And therefore, (3.) That the Rulers of the Church do well in imitating the Pattern set them by God, and no where in Scripture forbidden them to imitate, when they have the like reason for doing so. I am only concern'd in the two last of these. I own they are not unlawful in their own Nature. But then as to the 2d, that it appears hence they are useful, is not so clear. If he means that from the Institution they will appear to be useful, then the thing can't be deny'd ; but 'twill do him no good. For tho' we may then argue, God has appointed Men to pray by such a Form, therefore it will be useful. I say this can't be thence infer'd, and therefore I suppose the Strength of his Reasoning lies here ; A Form of Prayer is in its own Nature adapted to be useful, or else God would not have appointed any : But then there is one General Maxim, on which this depends, which wants much clearing ; and that is, that God never prescribes any thing but what would have been useful of its own Nature, without a Prescription. This the Doctor will evidently see to be false, when apply'd to the Sacraments. And therefore he can't certainly conclude at this rate. But then there is one little Circumstance which the Doctor takes for granted in his third Particular, which

which till it be prov'd will spoil his Conclusion, and that is, that God in prescribing Forms of Prayer design'd to set Church Rulers a Pattern. It must be own'd indeed that Church Rulers, as well as other Men, do well in imitating God in those things, wherein he has set them a Pattern. But if we are not cautious in judging whether he design'd this or no, we may run into many Absurdities : And I hope I may suppose God does enjoin things at some times, when he does not intend others should imitate him in enjoining the like. And as to what the Doctor alledges, God's no where in Scripture forbidding them to imitate him, I have given an Answer elsewhere. A limited Commission answers to a Prohibition of the things to which the Commission does not extend. There is but one thing more on this Head, and that is, they may thus imitate God, when they have the like reason for so doing : But we must first know certainly what God's Reason is for a thing, before we can conclude whether Men have the like.

Next he proceeds to consider what I say concerning the Lord's Prayer. And here he begins with the Particle *ὅταν*. I can't see that I charg'd the Doctor with laying a greater stress on that Particle, than his Words will be a sufficient ground for. And I shall only set down his Words in his Letter to Mr. D. on which my Charge was built, and then his Words now in his Examination, and leave it to the Reader to judge whether my Charge was just, and whether the Doctor has not gone off from his Argument. His Words in his Letter to Mr. D. p. 7. were these ; *And that it was our Saviour's design, that this Form should be us'd, as long as Christianity it self lasted in this World, is plain from his limiting no Time, after which the use of this Prayer should cease, and be no longer requisite : But on the contrary, expressing himself indefinitely, and without any Limitation. Thus, Luke 11. 2. When, i. e. whensoever (for the Greek Word is the Indefinite Particle ὅταν, whensoever, or in whatever Period of Time or Age of the World) ye pray, say, our Father, &c.*

But now he only says, *And surely tho' the Particle ὅταν may not always denote affirmatively, that the thing to which 'tis apply'd is to be of perpetual use. (Which is the only thing I argued against ; and therefore quite overthrows his Argument.) It thus much will always hold good of it Negatively ; that from it by no means can be infer'd any Limitation of that to which 'tis apply'd. And this I never pretended, but only that that Particle might be consistent with such a Limitation. And the Doctor now talks as tho' he had been only before Answering an Objection of the Dissenters from the Particle ὅταν, and not proposing an Argument of his own.*

As to what follows out of Bishop *Wilkins*, tho' I had not his Interpretation in view, when I cited those Texts, yet I am not concern'd at all at it. For I appeal'd for the Sense of them, not to Bishop *Wilkins*, but to the Doctor, who does not deny the Interpretation which I thought he would receive. And I ask him again, whether he does not think the Apostles were ascertain'd by those Texts of Inspiration in such a Sense, as no ordinary Christians since can expect? Nor indeed will Bishop *Wilkins's* Words certainly imply that he did not admit any Interpretation: For he may well be understood as Arguing *ad Hominem*, and the Stress of his Argument lies here, that Men can't in ordinary Cases reasonably depend on what is only given in Extraordinary. And this is a sufficient Answer, according to such Mens Principles. But I doubt very much whether the Bishop would deny that those Words contain a special Promise of Inspiration to the Apostles, or would assert that Christians could not in such extraordinary Cases have extraordinary Assistance, which yet fell short of such Inspiration. The Doctor says, *the Bishop argues there against an once common Opinion of the Dissenters*, but the Bishop does not say so himself, nor has the Doctor prov'd it, and so the Reflection in the Conclusion is ungrounded. I never design'd to intimate that there was no distinction to be made between *Solemn Prayers*, and what we call *Graces*: But only to give the Doctor a Hint how far his Argument would lead him if follow'd, and therein I have attain'd my End. And 'tis a little *Unlucky* (to use the Doctor's Phrase) that he should so smartly Animadvert on my Intellectuals, forgiving a Hint of that Nature, and yet with Approbation cite Mr. *Durel's* *Some Testim. p. 5.* Testimony concerning the *Dutch* and *Lutherans*, that they generally use to say the Lord's Prayer with their Grace after Meat.

I had alledg'd, that *as the Particle &ray did not certainly exclude Limitation, so the Doctor should have shewn that no other Circumstances did imply one.*

Now this the Doctor undertakes to prove from the Context of *St. Matthew*. And here his Argument plainly supposes, that in *Matth. 6.* 'tis prescrib'd as a Form of Prayer: For if it be not, all his Arguments from the Context fall in Course. Now then the Stress of his Argument must rest on that one Word *&ray*, which we have render'd, *after this manner*: And therefore if that Word will not certainly infer the necessity of using those very Words, he has not prov'd his Point. And hence the Doctor contends, *Letter to a Parishioner, p. 18.* It should be render'd, *SO or THUS, instead of AFTER THIS MANNER*, and reckons the contrary Opinion, that Christ only enjoin'd the Praying after that

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manner, tho' not in the very Words, to be only ground'd on Ignorance or Unskilfulness in the Greek Tongue. So that now the whole Stress of the Argument lying here on the Word *ἵνα*, the Question only is, whether it necessarily implies as much as he pretends? Now to imitate the Doctor's way of Arguing: As Learned a Man as the Doctor, and one, who well understood the Greek Tongue, and for whom he professes a great Esteem, does interpret that Word in the Sense that the Doctor rejects; I mean *Gratius*, whose Comment on the Place is thus set down, (*Synop. Critic. in Loc.*) "Pray to this Purpose. For Christ did not here enjoin, that the very Words should be used, which we do not read the Apostles did, (although that may be done profitably too) but he order'd them from hence to fetch the Matter of their Prayers. This I have the rather set down; because it does most fully express my Sense in this Matter, who accordingly use the Lord's Prayer in the Publick Assembly, tho' I can't say 'tis absolutely requir'd. And that Observation may not here be amiss apply'd, that had the Disciples understood Christ otherwise, they would not afterwards have desir'd him to teach them a Form. So that the whole Stress lies on *St. Luke*; where tho' he gives it them as a Form, yet we meet not with any such Circumstances as imply an Obligation to the constant Use of it. And since then he gave it them on their seeking, what I have observ'd might *perhaps be alledg'd by some*, is not so unreasonable as the Doctor represents it. Nor is what I say injurious to the Apostles. I think no Man who reads the Gospels, can forbear taking notice, that during our Saviour's Ministry they betray'd much Weakness, with which Christ does sometimes upbraid them, and the Removal of which was defer'd until the time of the pouring out of the Spirit on them, for which Reason Christ tells them how Expedient 'twas for him to go away from them. Now since here was a particular Reason for Christ's teaching them this Form, *viz.* Their asking him to do so, which, for ought the Doctor knows, might proceed from a Sense of their own Unskilfulness in the Duty, I think with *Gratius*, it's not being mention'd in any Account of their Prayers afterwards, when that Reason may be suppos'd to cease, is at least an Evidence, that we can't with Assurance say the constant and perpetual Use of it was enjoin'd. And there is a wide Difference between this Case and that alledg'd by him, *viz.* That we no more read in the Acts of the Apostles of Baptizing in the Name of the Father, Son, &c. than of the Use of the Lord's Prayer. For that Command of Christ, *Matth. 28.* was not given at their desire, nor had it a regard to any variable Circumstances: But prescribes the Method to be us'd in discipling Persons, and that to the end

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of the World. And as this was their Commission which mark'd out their Work, no one can doubt of their acting accordingly. Now I would ask the Doctor, whether he thinks it as plain and certain, when we read of the Apostles Praying, and have some of their Prayers recorded, that they used the Lord's Prayer, tho' it be not mention'd, as it is when we read in general of their Baptizing, that they did it in the Name of the Father, &c. Which was the only way of Baptizing Instituted or Allow'd by Christ? I will further add; that when we read, *Acts* 10. 48. *And he commanded them to be Baptiz'd in the Name (ἐν τῷ ὀνόματι) of the Lord*; This seems fairly to be understood thus, according to the Authority or Command of the Lord: And consequently this will imply their being Baptiz'd, as he Commanded, in the Name of the Father, &c. I do not mention this so much by way of Opposition, as to propose that Text to the Consideration of

better Judgments: It being an Observation which in my Mind may be useful, and the difference of the Phrase there from that in the Baptifmal Form, (*ἐἰς τὸ ὄνομα*) *Matth.* 28. 19. May serve a good Purpose against some common Enemies, whose Cause is not favour'd by that Form, and who are willing to suppose it was not constantly us'd.

The Doctor, in opposition to what I had said, says, *And the like may be said in reference to the most early Times of Christianity, supposing there was no mention made of the Lord's Prayer, that is, that it does no more appear that they us'd the Form of Baptizing than the Lord's Prayer.* But this is a great Mistake of the Doctor's. For as I alledg'd *Justin Martyr*, as not mentioning their Use of the Lord's Prayer, so 'tis easily prov'd from him, and that in the same (commonly call'd and cited as the) Second Apology, that they did not use the Form of Baptizing; for he expressly says, they were Wash'd in the Name of God the Father, and Lord of all, and of Jesus Christ our Saviour, and of the Holy Spirit. And this may serve for one Instance of the *Exactness of that Account*, which I said *Justin* had given us in that Apology: He charges me with putting upon my common Reader with a downright Quibble. But I assure the Doctor he is much mistaken. I spoke then my true Sentiments, I did (and with an humble Submission do) take that Apology to be a most exact Account of the Manner and Order of their Worship, and I believe *Justin* himself thought so too: And let any Man judge of this by the great Design of that Apology, and by those Words with which he ushers in his Account of Christian Baptism, saying, he would give an Account thereof, least otherwise he should be thought to deal unfairly in that his Narration. But I can easily discern what's

what's at the bottom of the Doctor's Reflection, and why he is willing it should be believ'd to be *the most exact Account comparatively, or of any that is given us, but not absolutely, or in it self: For as much as it sets down their Way of Worship, only as to the general Parts of it, not as to the several Particulars that made up each general Part.* The Reason's plainly this; The Doctor can't find those things in *Justin Martyr*, he would willingly believe to have been then in use, and therefore he makes it only an Account of the general Parts. Thus I suppose, because *Justin* gives us an Account of their Praying to God, yet because he does not set down an Account of the particular Forms of Prayer made use of: Because he gives us an Account of their Baptizing in the Name of the Father, &c. Yet because he mentions not any Humane Appendages and Ceremonies annex'd to it: Because he speaks of *Sunday* as the Day when they meet together to worship God, and does not mention other Festivals, his Account must not be look'd on as most exact. But with the Doctor's good leave, I still call it a most exact Account, and say, the Reason why he gives not an Account of those Particulars, in which I suppose the Doctor thinks him defective, appears to me to be no other than this, that those Particulars were not in Use in his Time. I own the Lord's Prayer was us'd in *Tertullian's* and *Cyprian's* Time, as appears by their Comments on it. Nor were either of those Treatises out of my Thoughts when I wrote those Words, and therefore I only spoke of the *MOST EARLY Times of Christianity*, and appealed to *Justin Martyr*: and if the Doctor can shew me a Testimony of the Use of the Lord's Prayer in any Author more ancient than *Justin*, he will be so far from displeasing me, that I declare I will heartily thank him.

And thus I have clear'd what I said concerning the Lord's Prayer: I shall next follow him to what he says concerning Christ's Prayer in the Garden.

Here 'tis to be observ'd, that the Stress of the Doctor's Argument was laid on those Words of the Evangelist, which we have render'd, *Saying the same Words.* And accordingly I propos'd to consider, *how far the Argument from those Words would hold, supposing them rightly render'd; and then to enquire whether they ought to be so render'd or no.* As to the first, I shew'd that *the Argument was not conclusive on the Doctor's own Supposition.* He thinks my first Observation grants him all that he contends for, because it allows that a Form of Prayer is not absolutely unlawful in it self, and when offer'd up with suitable Affections is pleasing to God. But I have evidenc'd already, that such a Concession does not affect the Merits of the Cause. (2.) I observ'd *Our Lord's Circumstances were each time the same, and so the same Words might well suit them;*

them ; whereas our Circumstances so continually vary, as that no Form can be always suppos'd to suit them. In Answer to this the Doctor says, Well, but what is this to us if it be so ? The true Question is, Whether our Circumstances so continually vary, as that no Form can generally suit them ; or can with a little Alteration (as by adding or leaving out a few Collects, &c.) be made always to suit them ?

I can't but think this is very much to them ; for the Doctor must suppose these Collects to be ready prepar'd, when they should be used, or else his Answer does not come up to the Difficulty : And I deny, that the Compilers of Forms can so foresee all such Occasions, as to enable them to prepare suitable Collects for them. Again, the Doctor supposes these Alterations refer'd to the Prudence of him who officiates, or he does not ; if he does, many such Circumstances as I refer to, will call for an Alteration, where the Imposers do not allow it. To give an Instance or two ; An Order of Council is necessary, before a Minister can leave out the Names of any Persons mention'd in the Prayers for the Prince and Royal Family : So that a Minister may happen to be necessitated to Pray for such as he certainly knows to be dead. Again, was there not need of an Alteration in the Litany in the time of the late King James ? Was it proper then to say, " That it may please thee, to keep and strengthen " in the true Worshipping of thee, in Righteousness and Holiness of Life, thy Servant James, our most gracious King and " Governour ? Or in the same King's Reign, when the Prince of Orange was coming over to be our Deliverer from the most eminent Danger, was it proper to Pray for King James, " That " God would strengthen him, that he might vanquish and overcome all his Enemies ? And yet no Alteration was allow'd to be made by them. If our Brethren are not sensible of any Inconveniences in these things, we envy them not their Satisfaction. But then, if the Doctor does not suppose these Alterations refer'd to the Prudence of him who officiates, how is his Answer to the Purpose ?

The Doctor adds, *Since Alteration or Variation is counted an Excellency in Conceiv'd Prayer, 'tis very hard to count it a great Imperfection in Forms.* But in answer to that, I declare I never counted it so ; but on the contrary, if Forms must be used, the greater Variety there is of them prepar'd ; and the greater Liberty there is allow'd the Minister for Alteration, the better they appear to be in my Judgment.

My 3d Observation was, *That the time between each Prayer of our Lord was short, and his Circumstances the same : (I added too, And his Affections were the same in each ; which the Doctor leaves out,*

out, because it would have spoil'd his Answer) and therefore it was no great wonder that he should use the same Expressions. He asks, whether the time between Morning and Evening Service be not very short, and our Circumstances (ordinarily) the same in the Afternoon, as in the Forenoon? and therefore it is not according to my way of Arguing, a very great wonder we must have new Prayers each time, and can't be content (as our Saviour was in the like Case) to use the same Expressions? But I answer;

1. This Inference is not fair; because 'tis not drawn from the whole of my Argument: But the Doctor has left out one Part of it; it being about the same single and particular Case Christ pray'd each time; and it being that which did so exceedingly affect him, 'tis no wonder the same Affections should dictate the same Expressions. And as I own'd, Persons might use the same Expressions on such a Supposition, so I can't think what he alledges, at all parallel to the Case of our Lord. And I have already given Reasons for such Variation as I contend for.

But, (2.) Suppose this Inference just, what does it signify to the Doctor's Cause? Will it hence follow, a Man must use the same Form all the Year round? Tho' the Time is short between Morning and Evening Service, is it so between Lord's Day and Lord's Day, &c.

4. I observ'd, That our Lord's Prayer was his own, and so of Divine Composition; and surely it can't be hence argued, that any one is bound to use a Form of another Man's making, that can't pretend to such an Original. The Doctor says, they don't argue so: But in my Mind they do, who argue, we are bound to obey Church Rulers in all things not sinful, and alledge the Example of our Lord to prove Forms of Prayer not sinful; and let but the Reader observe how far the Doctor's next Words go; But thus much is, and may be justly argued from hence, that 'tis not unlawful for to use any Form, and therefore by Consequence the Form of another's making, so it be but agreeable to the Will of God; and so may be said in some Sense to be of Divine Composition. Let but this be join'd with another Maxim of the Doctor's concerning Obedience due to Church-Rulers, and it clears me fully.

Farther, I suppose the Doctor in mentioning a Form agreeable to the Will of God, has a regard to the Matter of the Prayer: Now I can't see how he can from the Example of our Lord draw such a general Inference; for tho' a Form of Prayer be not in it self unlawful, yet may not a wise Man meet with a Form of Prayer, which, tho' it contains proper Matter of Prayer, yet is so weakly contriv'd, that he is able to do better without it? And would not the Doctor think it in such a Case unlawful for a Man to use such a Form? That then which is not absolutely unlawful

in it self, yet in some particular Circumstances may be so : And therefore such general Inferences of a Lawfulness in all Cases, from a granted Lawfulness in some, is not fair. But I am at a loss to know what that *Sense* is, in which the Doctor says any Form of another's making, so it be agreeable to the Will of God, may be said to be of Divine Composition. If the Matter of it be agreeable to the Will of God, yet if that Matter is compos'd by Men into a Form, I do not understand in what Sense the Composition can be said to be Divine, or any other than Humane. But however the Doctor has help'd the Dissenters to a Method, whereby they may set off their Prayers with an higher Encomium than they care to bestow on them ; for I suppose the Case will be the same in either sort of Prayers ; and therefore if the Dissenters can but be sure they pray for things agreeable to the Will of God, the Doctor will warrant their Prayers to be in a *Sense of Divine Composition*.

As to my last Observation, he refers to what he says elsewhere for an Answer ; and so I in like manner refer the Reader. And thus I have fully evidenc'd the Observations I made to be Just and Good ; and have shewn, that according to the Doctor's own Supposition, the Example of our Lord in the Garden does not hurt our Cause. Let us next consider, whether he has said any thing material to my Arguments against his Supposition : And here the Doctor says, *I have 3 Remarks*. The Doctor would, I suppose, call this in an Adversary a downright Quibble : Because there are really four ; but the fourth (which is indeed the most material of all) the Doctor did not think fit to take particular notice of ; and so he reduc'd the four to the three. Well, I'll begin with the fourth Remark, for indeed on the Truth and Justice of that the whole Matter turns. I had therefore said, that those Words τὸν αὐτὸν λόγον εἰπών, on which the great Stress is laid, should be render'd, *saying the same thing* ; that is, speaking to the same Sense or Purpose, viz. with the Account given before. I shew'd that this was agreeable to other Places where the same Word is us'd. Now this whole Controversy turns upon these 2 things. 1. Whether the Words used will bear this Sense ; and that the Doctor can't find in his Heart to deny, it being so abundantly proved. But he thinks by a trifling fling or two, he can utterly take off all the Force of it. He says, p. 35. *he has shewn my Remarks can by no means overthrow or weaken not so much his Assertion, as the Assertion of the holy Pen-men themselves* ; which is very disingenuous. When the Doctor can refute my Interpretation, I will not abide by it : But whether his or mine be true, is the Question : But that the Assertion of the holy Pen-men is true, is agreed by us both. He says,

*the Expression according to his Notion, may be understood in a plain and literal Sense, and needs not the Trouble of ransacking a Concordance to see, if there can't be found some Colour or Pretence to force an uncommon Sense on it, as mine is. But I ask the Doctor, whether mine is not a plain Sense as well as his? And whether if it be agreeable to the Use of the Word λόγος, it is not a literal one too? And what signifies it which way a Man comes by an Observation, supposing he alledges good Grounds for it? And indeed the Interpretation is so natural, that I needed not to have ransack'd a Concordance to find it; for if he will please to consult Pool's Synop. Critic. in Mat. 26. 44. he will find it alledg'd by Commentators, as much concern'd to plead for Forms as himself. And farther, is it not the most common thing in the World, in explaining Scripture, to consider how any Word is us'd in several Places? Is not this a Course taken by Dr. Hammond continually? And did ever any blame him for putting himself to that Trouble? And if I was at the Trouble to find out Places of Scripture to confirm that Interpretation, what Trouble need that be to the Doctor, who has no more to do than to turn to them, and see whether I have dealt fairly or no; and who may confute my Arguments drawn from them, if he can. And I leave it to any Man to judge, whether he would not have attempted it, if he had found it would be to any Purpose; especially since he seems to own, I have found some Colour or Pretence for my Interpretation: And he that considers how sparing the Doctor is in his Concessions, will be apt to suspect, that when the Doctor grants so much, there is Reason for his granting more. But now, supposing by that Remark I have evidenc'd that the Words are capable of the Sense alledg'd; (2.) The Question, whether they must be interpreted in the Sense or no, must then depend on Circumstances and Arguments drawn from the Context. And this was the Design of the three first Remarks, to shew that the Context did naturally lead to such an Interpretation. And I think those Circumstances are so many and considerable, that I doubt not but the Interpretation, given and confirmed by me, will be easily receiv'd by such as are not pre-ingag'd, by having Publish'd their Opinion to the contrary. And I the rather thus judge, because the Doctor, who was so much concern'd to overthrow it, is able to say so little against it. I refer the Reader again to those Circumstances I mention'd before, to which the Doctor returns (excepting of two Instances he gives of somewhat he thinks Parallel) no other Answer, than the Evangelists say, *he said the same Words*. His two Instances are,*

1. *The Variety of Expression between the Evangelists in their Account of the Institution of the Blessed Sacrament; as not setting down our Saviour's Words exactly alike: Either (says he) our Saviour spoke the Words of Institution once, or oftner (according as he has stated it, he may take which he pleases, since he says, if he spake them oftner, there was no Reason for altering the Expression) but, says he, if they were spoken but once, then the said Words of our Saviour, tho' the same as but once spoken, are yet found differently express'd in St. Matthew, St. Mark, and St. Luke; and so all the Force of this Objection is quite taken away by this Instance. But I would fain know how; I fear the common Reader, for whose Satisfaction this is design'd, will be as little able to discern the Force of his Argument, as I am. Every one knows the Evangelists relate some one thing, some another, more fully than the others; and we are to learn from all of them compar'd together, what Christ said or did, and 'tis enough in any one of them if he gives a true Relation, tho' he leaves out some Particulars, which may be supply'd by another. This appears evidently not to be contrary to their Design; nor do I think any Historian is concern'd to set down exactly the very Words spoken by Persons, when they give an Account of their Discourses. And so if the Evangelists express the Sense of what Christ said, 'tis sufficient. And therefore if it be suppos'd (as I think I have fully prov'd it) that they design'd not to set down the very Words but the Matter of his Prayer, when they say, *he pray'd, saying, &c.* they are also to be understood, when they afterwards say he pray'd, *τὸν αὐτὸν λόγον εἰπόν*, that he pray'd to the same Purpose with what they had before express'd. The 2d Instance he alledges, is in Opposition to the 3d Remark, *That the Words spoken by our Saviour to St. Paul; and the Words of St. Paul again to him, were spoken but once, and therefore could not admit of any Difference of Expression in reality, and yet in three different Places are express'd in a different Manner by the same inspir'd Writer, Acts 9. 22, 26.**

That one Observation I made concerning the other Instance fully clears this; and that is, the Design of the Expression us'd by the Evangelists is plainly this; having given an Account of our Lord's Prayer before, they say, *he pray'd again, saying the same thing*, referring (for shortness, and not designing to repeat again, what they had said before) to their former Account. And so the *αὐτὸς λόγος* is to be explain'd by what they themselves say before; and therefore since the first and second time are different, and yet all three times it was *ὁ αὐτὸς λόγος*, it evidently follows, that the Evangelists did not design that he each time said exactly *the same Words*, but only *the same thing*.

And

And thus, I hope, I have made good my Objections against the Doctor's second Instance of a false Teacher.

As to his 3d and 4th Instances, I thought I did sufficiently answer them by clearing the Sense of the Text on which they were grounded. But the Doctor thinks, P. 47. I ought to have however declar'd my Opinion openly in two material Points there started: The first is, whether I look on Forms to be in themselves Lets and Hinderances to Earnestness in Prayer? And as to that, I now openly declare my Opinion; That I do not look on Forms to be absolutely and in themselves Lets and Hinderances to Earnestness in Prayer, on two Accounts. (1.) Because I could not then allow them in any Case; as I plainly do, and recommend them in some; that is, when Persons are not able to do without them. (2.) I own they are not Hinderances in themselves, but only by reason of our Weakness and Indisposition: But then where this Weakness and Indisposition still remains (as I suppose it will do in all of us as long as we live) and withall Persons are arriv'd to this, to be able to do without them; I can't but think (if I may judge by my own Experience) Forms do prove Lets and Hinderances to Earnestness in Prayer, as they occasion their Neglect of a very proper Method to promote it. And both these things being so fully express'd in my Remarks, I think the Doctor had no Reason to complain of any Omission.

(2.) His other Point which he thinks I ought to have openly declar'd my Opinion in, is, Whether to pray by a Form is a quenching the Spirit, or a Sign that he that so prays is not endued with the Spirit, as much as any other that prays without a Form? Now to this I answer, that tho' I make no doubt, that they who use a Form may have the Assistance of the Spirit, yet, if it be true, as I doubt not but it is, that the Holy Ghost does often upon Occasion, suggest to us proper Matter of Prayer, I can't help thinking, that Men who tie themselves up to a Form of Prayer, do not give him so fair an Opportunity for Assistance of that Nature, as they who us'd conceiv'd Prayer: And I did not think I needed to take notice of this Assertion, and the Doctor's Arguments in his Letters to Mr. D. because I thought it evident to any Man, who reads my Letter, that the Spirit was not given to Christ on the same Accounts he is to us, I mean to help any such Infirmary, as I acknowledge this to be, but which all grant our Lord to have been perfectly free from.

Far be it from me to say our Brethren have not the Assistance of the Spirit. I know my self many whom I really believe to be sincere and good Men, and I could not believe them such, and

and yet deny them the Assistance of the Spirit. And tho' I esteem this a small Evidence of my Charity toward Church-men, yet I am sorry to say it far exceeds any Discoveries which the Doctor makes of his Charity towards us. But in my Judgment, the real Question here is, Whether the Gift of Prayer, according as Bp. *Wilkins* has accounted for it, be a useful valuable Gift, or no? And whether we should not use Means our selves, and give Scope for the Assistance of the Spirit, in order to our attaining to, and improving in it.

Next we come to his 5th Assertion; he says, *this was founded on Eccles. 5. 2. and stands thus; Whosoever teaches that praying without Form, and Extempore, is to be prefer'd to praying by Form, as being more agreeable to the Will of God, is (in short) a false Teacher.* Here, he says, I betake my self to shuffling, and instead of considering this Assertion, cull out another, which I thought I could better say something to. But this is all really very groundless. I said therefore *that in this Instance the Doctor was still establishing the same Assertion:* And what did I mean but the Assertion I had just before discuss'd, *That Conceiv'd Prayer was not preferable to Forms;* but these were equally acceptable. And I appeal to any one, whether the Doctor's 2d Assertion, *That he that teaches the using of Forms is not most highly acceptable to God, or less acceptable than, or not equally acceptable as New and Extempore Prayer, is a false Teacher.* And his 5th Assertion, *That he that teaches that praying without a Form is preferable to praying with, as more agreeable to the Will of God, is a false Teacher,* be not so far for the Substance the same, as to warrant my saying in general, that he is *establishing the same Assertion* in this latter, and so saving my self the trouble of transcribing. And I profess I can't imagine what other End the Doctor can suppose I propose to serve by it: Well, let us see what the Assertion is which I cull'd out; Why, 'tis this, *That he that prays by a Form, prays in such a manner as enables him to pray more agreeably to the Rule above-mention'd.* And that this is his Assertion he does not deny; and he ushers it in towards the Conclusion of the 5th Instance, with these Words, *The plain Consequence of all which is this:* and then afterwards adds, *that whosoever teaches the contrary Assertion* (setting down what he calls his Assertion, and which he has now again transcrib'd) *is a false Teacher:* So that I had set down the plain Consequence of his Argument, and had only given a general Hint of his asserting a Man a false Teacher that oppos'd this Consequence; and yet he complains I shuffle; profess I am sorry I am forc'd to trespass on the Reader's Patience, by using so many Words in so plain a Case; but 'tis evident 'tis not my own Fault: I urg'd the Consequence

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of this Argument, that it plainly condemns all those that us'd conceiv'd Prayer, as rash and hasty: He says, *this is a stretching his Argument, because he has all along a Regard to publick Worship.* But not to mention that the Doctor had given no Caution to the contrary, which may be suppos'd necessary where a Man argues generally; I might be led to this by the very nature of his Arguments; for two of his Assertions, and a third in part, are grounded purely on a private Prayer of our Lord in the Garden; and therefore if they will hold in publick Prayers, much more in Private: And let but any Man impartially consider the Doctor's Words under that Head, and I fear not to stand to his Determination, whether the Doctor has not here carry'd the Matter farther than he now cares to own: Besides the Doctor does not now say, that the Text he argues from relates wholly to Publick Prayer. And since he quotes Bp. Wilkins's Paraphrase, I desire to know whether that does not as much relate to Private as to Publick Prayer; I know the Doctor mentions such Remedies as may be used in private Prayer to prevent Rashness, which are not proper to be used in publick: But still I ask, whether there are not sufficient Remedies to prevent Rashness in Publick Prayer prescribed by Bp. W.

And farther, the same Argument against Conceiv'd Prayer in Publick, will hold good against it in a Family, to which the *Irish Story* does chiefly relate: And when I say, *the Doctor's Consequence falls hard on the Primitive Christians, all Protestants, and the Church of England her self*, I have therein evidently a Regard to Publick Prayer.

I have said enough before in answer to the Question he propounds in speaking to the third Remark; and therefore shall only say, that I could never see a Proof of the general Use of Forms from the earliest Ages of Christianity.

I propos'd a Question, *What the Doctor would have a Nonconformist do, that has weigh'd the Establish'd Form, and declares that, according to his best Judgment, he finds many things that need Alteration?* He answers, he ought either to alter such his Judgment: But suppose it be (as I put it) his best Judgment, and he can't alter it, which a Man can't do at Pleasure; He says then, *he must submit it so far to the Judgment of the Church Governours, as not to cause any Separation.* But suppose this Person himself a Church-Governour, or suppose those stiled Church-Governours act herein, in imposing a Form, without due Authority; on whom is the Separation then chargeable?

I had said the *Text related to Vows, and not to Prayer*: And here the Doctor refers me to Bp. Wilkins, who interprets it of Prayer, and thinks that can't but be of sufficient Weight to satisfy me

me of the true meaning of the Text, since I lay, *for ought I ever heard, the Dissenters are well pleas'd with the said Discourse.* But does the Doctor think I intended by that Expression to acknowledge every Interpretation given by the Bishop; I don't think he would like to have the same measure dealt to him with Relation to the Book of Homilies, to which he has Subscrib'd. I knew very well how the Bishop explain'd the Text, when I gave the other Interpretation, and I thought I had better Reasons for mine from the Context, than he could for his; and accordingly I produc'd them, tho' the Doctor from his great Aversion to Shuffling, takes no notice of them. And I did not acquiesce in that Interpretation, because it was Bp. Patrick's, and indeed I had given it, and my Reasons for it, before I knew it was his: But till my Reasons are disprov'd, I shall think that Interpretation is a full Answer to all that is argued by the Doctor from that Text.

His sixth Assertion follows next in order, and it relates to *Preaching with-in Book*, and of this the treats, *Exam. p. 36.* We are agreed as to the Lawfulness of the Thing contended for, and are now only concern'd about what the Doctor alledges in Vindication of his Proof. I alledg'd that 'twas not safe arguing from Divine Goodness, and gave two Instances to prove it: The Doctor says, *these do by no means prove what I would have them;* and he takes no manner of notice of that on which I did in express Words lay the greatest Stress: But he says as to the other, that *it may be truly asserted, that the Divine Goodness did exert it self to the utmost, as things stood, and without acting contradictorily, in order to preserve Man in the State of Innocency.* I doubt not at all of the Goodness of God toward Man in his State of Innocency, nor of his perfect Wisdom in all Dealings with him: But the Question here, is, whether the Doctor can prove, that it had not been an *Act of Goodness in God, to have prevented the Devil's tempting him to Sin;* or whether he can prove, that *this would have been to act contradictorily;* tho' this may be really true, and would appear so to us, did we understand all the Reasons of Things, yet this is nothing to our Purpose: There I lay the Stress, that we are not able always to understand the Reasons of Things; that therefore may really be an *acting contradictorily* with regard to him, which our Conceptions will not help us to discern to be so. And therefore to argue barely from the Divine Goodness in this Case is not fair. Besides I had in my second Remark offer'd a Reason, which was sufficient to invalidate this Argument, *viz.* That tho' Preaching without Book were the most efficacious Means, yet notwithstanding God's Goodness, he might as a Punishment for their despiteful Treatment of his Pro-

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phet, not afford it them, and especially not by working a Miracle in order to their having it: And I ask'd him farther, *Whether Divine Goodness does always engage him to use the most efficacious Means, if any at all? And whether he will not allow God gradually to with-hold his Hand on Men's Provocations?* And this was the Case of the Jews, who had so wretchedly abus'd that great Instance of God's Favour, the special and extraordinary Prophet *Jeremiah*, whom he had rais'd up, and they, for his having faithfully deliver'd the Will of God to them, had cast into Prison.

I had said, *If this Argument proves any thing, it proves that a Man's Preaching by Proxy, is as efficacious as his Preaching himself.* He says, *he confesses he is so far of my Mind, as to think the foregoing Instance will very seriously justify a Minister's procuring (when he is disabled himself to officiate) a Proxy to perform his Office, if so be Care be taken that the Proxy be as suitable for the Business as Baruch was.* And I suppose no one ever doubted of the Lawfulness of this; I am sure my Words will not give any Umbrage of my putting such a Case as this: But the Doctor would fain give his Argument another Turn than what it had before: It was built before on Divine Goodness, that supposing it design'd to bring Men to Repentance, it must be suppos'd to use the most efficacious Means, and consequently Preaching with-in Book is such; or otherwise God would have so order'd Matters, as that *Jeremiah* should have deliver'd his Message himself, or else would have order'd and enabled Baruch to have so deliver'd it, and not to have read it out of a Book. I ask the Doctor then, Does not his own Argument as fully conclude for Preaching by Proxy, or that a Proxy's Preaching not his own Works (which Case the Doctor now puts) but the Works of him whose Proxy he is, is as efficacious and edifying a way of Preaching, as a Man's Preaching himself? Let him shew wherein the Difference of these two Ways of arguing lies; and till then I shall esteem that a good Argument, which the Doctor calls *Drollery*. He says I have too mean and unworthy an Opinion of Baruch, in comparing him to no other than a common *Parish Clerk*. But I answer, My Argument was not at all concern'd to do so, nor did I, who only was evidencing that Preaching by Proxy might as well be argued from the Text, as Preaching within Book. But I will venture to imitate the Doctor's Way of arguing here, and say, *I believe all sober and judicious Persons will think the Doctor has too mean and unworthy an Opinion of that special and extraordinary Prophet Jeremiah, in setting him on a level with Baruch, who was himself no Prophet.* This he does, while he argues from that Text, that Preaching within Book is not less efficacious and edifying than Preaching without Book,

which must be on this Supposition, that *Baruch's* reading the Prophecy to the People was as efficacious and edifying, as the Prophet *Jeremiah's* delivering it himself. I assure the Doctor in the next Place, in speaking of Pluralists, I had no manner of aim at him, or Design that any should imagine I had : I scorn so base a Design as the putting into Peoples Heads evil Suspitions and Surmizes of an Adversary without good Evidence, and as I had no Evidence or Suspicion of that Matter, so I am heartily glad I can now testify to him, that I really honour him, on the account of the honest and noble Disposition he has express'd : And I profess it grieves me to think that such generous Souls should, contrary to their Inclination and Tendency, by a few narrow Principles, be cramp'd into such uncharitable Thoughts of their Brethren : Nor did I design any Reflection on such as, through a real want of Subsistence in one, held neighbouring Cures, which they supply'd themselves. But my Aim was at those who were well provided for in one Cure (and such are very common) and yet hold one, and some several more, which they can take no care of themselves, and who, while they often enjoy themselves the far greater Part of the Profits of the Living, put off him who officiates and performs the Pastoral Work, with what is comparatively inconsiderable ; so that I think the Doctor and I do not here differ at all : And this fully takes off what he alledges concerning Pluralities among the Dissenters. And as to his other Allegation, I know of none of their Congregations that are so numerous as that they can't meet together to worship God in one Place ; or where the Members are so distant, that they do not ordinarily do so : Which renders their Case very different from that of some Parishes objected against ; so that he might have spar'd his severe but not pertinent Application of the Text (*Mat. 7. 5.*) to me.

Next we are to consider the Matter of *symbolizing with the Papists* : And here I allow'd the Doctor, that the Papists Preach without Book, and seldom or never within Book ; and added, no doubt their Reason is, because they judge it the most perswasive way, as I can't but own that, generally speaking, it is. The last Words the Doctor overlooks, which yet I think very material, for hereby I only alledge the Nature of Things, and appeal to common Experience, whether that way of Speaking, when well manag'd does not add Life to what is said, and more command the Attention of an Auditory ? But the Doctor observes, that in like manner they may say, that the Papists use the Surplice, Sign of the Cross, &c. no doubt because they judge them most decent and proper to be us'd. Very well, but then the Question is, whether 'tis as obvious, that they judge right in the one as in the other.

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Common Experience confirms the one, but what is there to confirm the other?

I ask'd whether the Doctor *thought us so silly as to believe, that because the Papists use both ways of Preaching and Praying, within and without Book, therefore we are to use neither?* The Doctor says, *this does not at all belong to our Case,* (but in my Mind it does very much, for if he can't think so of us, he must then own that not to be our Principle) *because the common Dissenters seem not to know that the Papists Preach and Pray without Book, as well as their Teachers, and therefore are apt to think it a Gift peculiar to their Teachers.* But I hardly believe our common Dissenters think this a Gift peculiar to their Teachers, but mostly know that several Church-men do the same. But I would ask the Doctor, whether he thinks the common Dissenters do not know there are many Circumstances attending their Worship, and that of the Papists, as that their Priests have Pulpits, stand when they Preach, have Clothes on, &c. and whether they think these unlawful because the Papists use them? And therefore tho' I can't speak particularly of *De Lawne's* Book as to this Point, not having it by me, and it being several Years since I read it, yet I can't think he, or any common Dissenter of tolerable Sense, and who knew any thing of the Papists, would say, that 'tis a receiv'd Principle among the Dissenters, *That 'tis not expedient or good to symbolize or agree with the Papists in things belonging to Divine Worship,* without intending it to be understood under some Restrictions or Limitations.

Next the Doctor considers the Account I give of the Dissenters Opinion in this Matter: He thinks from my first Remark may be infer'd, the Power claim'd by the Governours of the Church, to impose all they do impose. For, 1. I own that the Care of God's Worship is lodg'd not equally with all, but peculiarly with some. 2. *That 'tis necessary that they with whom the Care of God's Worship is so lodg'd, should fix and settle such Circumstances as relate thereunto,* (but this is stretching my Words; for I don't say they must fix and settle Circumstances in general, but only such as are necessary to be determin'd, without the determining of which there can be no publick Worship.) 3. *That there are some Circumstances that must be determin'd, as Time, Place, &c.* Wherefore, 4. *He desires to know what I include under my [&c.]* (I answer, All other Things that are necessary, in order to the true worshipping of God. He adds,) *Whether under it may not reasonably be included Demeanour, or Behaviour, Manner or Way of Praying, or the like Circumstances necessary to be determin'd for the more decent Performance of God's Worship.* I answer, That Reverence in our Behaviour in the Worship of God is commanded

by God himself, and therefore they are to see to't, that that general Rule be observ'd, and that there be no Irreverence in God's Worship; but I deny that they have a Power to enjoin one and the same Posture to be us'd by all, in any particular Act of Worship, and especially where the Lawfulness of the Posture is question'd: For I think the Worship of God may be perform'd without this, and there may be Reverence of Behaviour without Uniformity of Posture. As to what he says about the *Manner and Way of Praying*; I suppose he means, whether it shall be with or without a Form, or with a Mixture of both. Now supposing that I have prov'd the Necessity of allowing Conceiv'd Prayer, where Forms are us'd, they can't have a Power to exclude it; but as to the Mixture of both, suppose I should allow that the Governours of every particular Church have a Power to determine either way, this will not affect our Cause, because 'tis on this I lay the great Difference in my Letter, p. 8. And here indeed lies the very Heart of the Controversy between the Conformists and Non-Conformists, whether those, who under the Notion of Church-Rulers, do impose one Form of Prayer to be constantly us'd in all worshipping Assemblies in this Nation, have a just Power or Commission to do as they do.

As to that Text, *Mat. 23. 2.* I gave in my Letter a full Answer to't, and need only to refer the Reader to it, p. 25.

As to what he urges from the 23d Verse of that Chapter, I own 'tis somewhat specious, and therefore I shall here closely consider it. The Words of Christ are these, "Wo unto you
" Scribes and Pharisees, Hypocrites; for ye pay Tithe of Mint,
" and Annise, and Cummin, and have omitted the weigh-
" tier Matters of the Law, Judgment, Mercy, and Faith;
" these ought you to have done, and not to leave the other un-
" done.

The Doctor says, That *these things were not requir'd by the Law, but only by the Constitutions of the Scribes and Pharisees, and yet (because they were not contrary to the Law) our Saviour expressly declares, ought not to be left undone. Whence 'tis fairly argued by us, that tho' the wearing the Surplice, the Use of the Sign of the Cross, &c. are enjoyn'd not by the Scriptures, but by the Governours of the Church; yet because the said Governours do not act herein contrary to the Scriptures, therefore they ought to be observ'd.*

I might observe that the Doctor does here overthrow one of his Answers to that Text, *Mat. 15.* alledg'd in his Letter to a Dissenting Parishioner, p. 15. for according to his own Notion, will he not suppose they laid as much Stress on these as their other Traditions? Did they not as much teach these for Do-

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Strines, as the washing Hands before Meat? And therefore since that Answer won't, according to him, hold here, in tithing the Mint, Annise, and Cummin, neither will it there. But as to the Text it self, *Grotius* has explain'd it so, as fully to take off all the Force of it against us. (*Vid. Synop. Critic. in loc.*) "Christ did not determine the Controversy about the Right of these Things, but only says, Since you are pleas'd to interpret the Law in such a manner as you do, you ought to do those things, but yet so as not to omit the greater and more important Matters of the Law. And if this Sense be allow'd, it carries in it no more than this, that in an indifferent Thing, which might be done or not done, an erroneous Conscience, judging it not indifferent but necessary, did oblige to the doing of it; which I think all will grant to be a great Truth. But I think there is somewhat more to be consider'd with reference to this Text, and that is this, That tho' there was no Law that did enjoin the paying Tithes of these Things, yet there was an express Law of God which could warrant the Lawfulness of it; and that is the Law of Vows, according to which a Man might voluntarily devote any Part of his Estate to the Service of God. And in such Cases a Man was not to break his Word, *Numb.* 30. 2. Now I am apt to think, the Scribes and Pharisees were under a religious Vow to observe the Rules of Pharisaism: To which Purpose *Dr. Lightfoot* (*Works, Vol. 2. p. 123.*) says, "That the Women who embrac'd Pharisaism, did it of their own Free-Will and Vow, not by Command, which the Men-Pharisees also did. And to this Purpose I desire it may be observ'd, that Christ speaks of their paying Tithes themselves, and not of their commanding others to pay them: Nor indeed do I think it can be prov'd, that they did require this of any but their own Sect; to which Purpose let those Words in the Parable, *Luke* 18. 12. be consider'd: In which 'tis but rational to suppose, that he boasts of somewhat peculiar to a Pharisee; wherein he imagin'd he excell'd those that were not of his own Sect: *I fast twice a Week; I give Tithes of all that I possess.* Now, tho' 'tis true, some of the Rules of Pharisaism might be unlawful, and to them their Vow could not bind them, yet certainly in such a Matter as this, of consecrating part of their Estates to the Service of God, which was left in general to the Liberty of such as were at their own Disposal, it did oblige them, not by virtue of any Constitution or Law of the Pharisees, but by virtue of the Law of Vows. And therefore, as I observ'd, Christ says only to the Scribes and Pharisees, YE ought not to have left these things undone (that is on such a Supposition) but does not say that others were bound by their Laws. And I again here urge what

I did in my Remarks, that if Christ had thought the Jews were bound by the Traditional Laws of the Elders in such Things as God had not commanded, provided they were innocent in themselves, he could not then have vindicated his Disciples as he did, *Mat. 15.* for not observing a Ceremony enjoined by them, tho' it was in its own Nature perfectly innocent, as I think washing of Hands before Meat must be acknowledg'd by all to be: And so I hope I have fully clear'd the Dissenters Cause from being at all concern'd in that Text. And hence the Doctor may see that I am no ways oblig'd to prove the Sign of the Cross not to be indifferent (any more than he is to prove that washing Hands before Meat is so) tho' if this were a Place for it, I don't think that so hard to be done.

(2.) I alledg'd, *that the Church of Rome is, and for several Ages has been Idolatrous, &c.* He asks, *What is that to them who agree with them in nothing Idolatrous, &c.* But I think 'tis very much to them, with reference to that Purpose for which I alledg'd it, viz. To shew how improper they are to be made a Pattern, and how unreasonable 'tis to retain the Things in Controversy, only from an Affectation of Conformity to them; which is so plain in it self, as also in my Letter, that I can't but wonder he should overlook it. And to make it yet plainer, I will set it off with this Allusion, that since the Church of Rome is acknowledg'd to be Idolatrous. and the most impure and corrupt Communion in the World, there can be no better Reason given why a Reform'd Church should affect a Conformity to that Church, than there can be why a modest Woman should affect the Garb, Dress, or Air of the vilest Strumpet. But the Doctor, by my leave, would know why it should be thought a vain Humour in them to please the Papists, by retaining some things in Conformity with them as far as they can; and yet not be counted likewise a vain Humour in them, to go about to please the Dissenters, by laying aside things innocent and even decent in themselves? I will tell the Doctor then, why I count it a vain Humour in them to endeavour to please the Papists, even because I count it a certain thing, that Union with that Church can never be obtain'd without returning back to their notorious Superstition and Idolatry. I do likewise think, that Learned Men of the Doctor's own Communion, such as Mr. Joseph Mede, Dr. More, Dr. Cressener, and especially of late that most ingenuous Author Mr. Whiston, hath fully prov'd, that 'tis to the Pope and his Church those Descriptions do belong in the Scripture, *Of the Man of Sin, the great Whore, &c.* I think it therefore clear from them, that God has given several express Commands to avoid Communion with her, lest we be Partakers in her Plagues. And if this be true, and that is a Church so utterly ab-

abhor'd of God, I do not understand how it can be otherwise than vain and sinful too, to retain any thing meerly in Conformity to them, or to affect a Likeness to them. And if the Doctor thinks he has reason to entertain the same Notions of the Dissenters (who are not chargeable with any Idolatry, Impurity, and Corruption) he appears to be a Man of too inveterate Prejudices to gain Conviction by a Dispute. But this we are assur'd of, that all are not of his Mind, but there are many as Learned and Pious as the Doctor, who look upon us in a quite different manner, and judge our Differences to be in such small things as may easily admit of an Accommodation, and accordingly long for it. And this encourages us to hope, that notwithstanding the Opposition made by some, there will come a time when our Divisions shall be ended; and we therefore pray that God would pour out a Spirit of Peace on Men in order hereunto. The good Lord hasten it in his time; and let good Christians say, *Amen.*

And farther, is there no Prospect of more Gain and Advantage to the Interest of Religion among us, by yielding some Things to the Dissenters, than by retaining a Conformity to the Papists in the disputed Rites? Is it nothing to have Protestants in this Nation more firmly and closely united, and to have Christian Love and Peace promoted? Would it be no Advantage to Religion to remove those stumbling Blocks out of our way, at which the Doctor sees we stumble, and therefore looks on us as Schismatics, and in a State of Damnation? Are their *indifferent* Ceremonies (as they call them) more worth than the Souls of all the Dissenters in this Nation? If this be the Doctor's Charity, I pray God for ever bless and keep me from Men of such Charity. And tho' the Doctor thinks the Things in dispute *innocent*, yet since he can't judge them necessary for the saving of our Souls, he should be willing to part with them: And he can't (one would think) when he seriously considers this Matter, expect to give up an Account with Joy, of his pleading professedly against the parting with them. He thinks them indeed *decent*; but I may well defy the Doctor to shew wherein the Decency of them lies, or to prove the Worship of God will be any ways indecent in the Absence and Want of them. But if the Doctor thinks that an equal Regard is to be had to the Papists and Dissenters, I will not much wonder that he represents the latter as Carnal, in being concern'd for Success against *France*.

(3.) I said, we thought that all *useless* Monuments of Superstition and Idolatry should be abolish'd. The Doctor says, and so do we think too. Very well, I am glad of it; the Controversy then turns

turns on these two Points, (1.) Whether the Ceremonies in dispute are Monuments of Superstition and Idolatry. Now if these Things in the Church of *Rome*, from whence they are receiv'd, were Superstitious and Idolatrous, then certainly they are such Monuments. (2.) Whether these Things are useless; and as to that I defy the Doctor to disprove it by shewing the Usefulness of them; and do withal assert them to be exceeding hurtful, as they cause Divisions among Christians in this Nation.

I come now to consider what he says in vindication of his seventh Assertion, p. 50. I had said, *I'm fully satisfy'd there is no dissenting Minister in this Kingdom, who teaches or believes such a thing, viz. That Praying without a Form, or Preaching without Book, are true and certain Signs of being Spiritually gifted.* And if the Doctor will but believe the dissenting Ministers are capable of an ordinary measure of Thought, he must own what I laid to be true. For I would ask him, whether he thinks any of them do imagine a wicked Man can give true and certain Signs of his being Spiritually gifted; or whether he thinks they do not all of them know, there have been Ministers both in and out of the Church, who have us'd both those Things, tho' they have evidenc'd themselves by their Lives not to have had the Spirit. The Doctor says, *he has had this urg'd to him more than once, as a certain Sign of their being Spiritually gifted; and that to Pray extempore, and to Pray by the Spirit, are Expressions promiscuously used by the common Dissenters, as if they were altogether equivalent, and the one inseparable from the other: And this he thinks must be owing to their Teachers, as not endeavouring to undeceive them.* But I put it to the Doctor, whether he thinks they will acknowledge a wicked Man to be Spiritually gifted, because he uses that way of Preaching and Praying. I dare say, let the Case be put to them, that such a Man is a Swearer, Drunkard, Liar, or Adulterer, and yet Prays and Preaches without Book, they will immediately deny his being Spiritually gifted. I will therefore tell the Doctor what I apprehend from his Account of this Matter, viz. That some common Dissenters, whom the Doctor has talk'd with, may have said somewhat to this Purpose, that as there was a discernable Seriousness in their Minister's way of Praying or Preaching, and they could find both to be very useful and edifying to them, they did not doubt but that he had the Assistance of the Spirit: But then I doubt not, they would have it suppos'd that they had no Evidence to the contrary, that they knew his Conversation and manner of Life to be such, as became a Christian and a Minister. And in my mind Charity should direct us to judge thus in every the like Case. I profess I judge thus of the Conformists, and believe I ever shall

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shall do so. Common People are ready on all sides to use loose Expressions of things, and a Man who lies at the catch with them, by the Help of a little Sophistry, may make them endeavour to advance and defend them, in a Sense in which they did not at first design them, and in which, if they were talk'd fairly with, they would disclaim them. And so I can't but think the very Dissenters the Doctor talks of, would readily own, that a Man may Pray without a Form and without the Spirit too, and that these are not therefore inseparable from one another. And it is really unmanly and disingenuous to pick up such Scraps of Objections from the private Conversation (and especially from the Dialect) of the common People; and then by alledging and answering them, make a shew of confuting the whole Body of the Dissenters: And how easy is it in this Case to retaliate!

As to the Doctor's next Paragraph, 'tis so slight that I can't but desire the Reader to review in my Letter that third Remark concerning this his Seventh Assertion, and judge whether it deserv'd not a more distinct and particular Answer. I am sure it nearly touches the Claim the Doctor lays in for the Rights of the Parochial Ministers.

He says, *As to the Controversy between us concerning the Obligation Parishioners lie under, to look on their Parish-Ministers to be their rightful Minister, it depends on the Obedience due to Church-Governours, and therefore unless I can disprove that, this will hold good of Course.* But in that very Place I alledg'd what I think is sufficient to shew the Weakness of their Claim. I had likewise said, in opposition to the Stress the Doctor laid on the Churchmen's being the Parishes own Ministers, that *in a Popish Country the Parochial Minister's the Schismatick, and the Protestant the Catholick*: And in answer to this, the Doctor says, *'Tis too plain to need Proof, that the Case of the Parish-Ministers here amongst us, is by no means the same with those in a Popish Country, for as much as not the Parish-Minister, but the Dissenting Teacher is the Schismatick, or he that separates from the National and Apostolical Church.* And so all is well, and he has given a full Answer, but the Unhappiness is, there are many Things too plain to the Doctor to need Proof, which appear so very uncertain and false to the Dissenters, as to need a great deal more Proof to make them out, than he cares to bestow: And the big Words of a *National and Apostolical Church*, contribute nothing to the Proof of the Matter in hand. Besides, the joining of those Words together sounds a little odd in the Ears of those who can't discover any National Churches at all in the Apostle's Days.

The Doctor had alledg'd, that *'tis unwarrantable for the Dissenters to be puff'd up for their Teachers against the Parish-Ministers,*

sters, from 1 Cor. 3. In answer to this, he says, I make two Remarks. (1.) That the Dissenters are Ministers of Christ. (2.) That a Man may prefer one Person before another without being puff'd up, &c. To which he replies, that supposing the Dissenters are Ministers of Christ, yet this alters not the Case, for as much as those were all certainly Ministers of Christ, in respect of whom St. Paul blames the Corinthians, as being puff'd up for one against the other. But I wonder what Name the Doctor will give this Usage: I am sure that of shuffling will not reach to it. He has curtail'd my Words, so as quite to alter the Sense of them: For in that Remark I retort the Doctor's Argument, and use these Words, p. 27. *That if the Dissenters are Ministers of Christ, and the Doctor has as yet alledg'd nothing tolerable to prove the contrary, then this Consequence falls heavily on the Doctor and several of his Brethren, who are puff'd up with a Witness against Dissenters, &c.* I can't but here make this unlucky Remark, That that Man's very little to be trusted in reporting the Opinions of common Dissenters from any private Conversation, who does so notoriously misrepresent the Sense of an Adversary, when it lies before him in plain Words printed at length, and he may so easily be convinc'd of it. Let the Doctor, who is so frequent and free in charging me with shuffling, and is himself guilty of that or worse, consider whether I have not more reason to apply those Words to him, which he applies to me, *Thou Hypocrite, first cast out the Beam out of thine own Eye, &c.* p. 37. As to his other Reply, it signifies nothing till he prove the Blame of the Separation not to be justly chargeable on themselves, but on us; and he may see this Matter consider'd in the third Remark, which he briefly hinted at before, but which really belong'd to this very Thing, and might have sav'd him the Trouble of his second Reply.

His next Assertion is, *about Feasts and Festivals*; and this he thinks (*Exam. p. 52.*) is the only one which I have gone about fairly to disprove, without shuffling, or pretending he had misrepresented us. The Doctor may therefore by this Instance see I am not unwilling to own it, when he does really oppose any of our Opinions; and I wish I had no more reason to complain of his misrepresenting us, than he has of my shuffling.

I had represented the Dissenters Principles with Reference to this Matter in five Things, which the Doctor considers in order.

1. *The Dissenters think that God himself has appointed one Day Weekly for the thankful Remembrance of his Mercies.* And added what the Doctor has left out, supplying its Place with a fly [&c.] for an obvious Reason; *Wherein we are bound particularly to bless God for the great Work of our Redemption by Christ, and for all*

all that Christ has done and suffer'd for us in order to the accomplishing of it; and therefore they think it needless for Men to appoint other Days Yearly for the same thing. Before I consider what the Doctor says in answer to this, I shall first a little clear it: When I said, *That God had appointed one Day Weekly for the thankful Remembrance of his Mercies,* I had a Regard to those Mercies of Creation, &c. for which God appointed at first the Seventh Day of the Week to be observ'd; and so my Design was this, that as God has now chang'd the Festival from the Seventh to the First Day of the Week, on which Christ rose from the dead, and so this Day has a special Reference to Christ, and is design'd more especially for this end, that we should thereon praise God for him, and the Blessings we owe to him; yet as the Seventh Day ceas'd not to be Holy, and the first became so upon this Change, I thought the other Blessings of Creation were not to be overlook'd, but the great Work of the Seventh Day of the Week, with the Addition of somewhat more, as peculiarly adapted to the new Dispensation of his Grace, were both to be perform'd solemnly and statedly on the First Day of the Week: So that I here suppose a Day set apart by God himself for the thankful and solemn Commemoration of those Mercies, which in common do concern us and all Christians, who are all oblig'd accordingly to observe this Day. This thankful Remembrance, viz. of such general and common Mercies, God appointed to be on a certain Day Weekly, and hence I said, *When God had done thus, it was needless for Men to appoint and impose other Days on the same account.* And now I ask the Doctor, whether this be true or no? If it be not, he then charges God with not appointing what was needful; if he says, tho' he has not appointed other Days himself, yet he has left it to others to appoint them, and so they may not be needless: I answer, the Doctor should then have produc'd their Commission, which I demanded, tho' he takes no notice of it. And farther, if it were not needless for Men to appoint such Festivals, then it must be needful for all Church-Rulers to appoint them: That which will be a Reason for one in one Place, will be a Reason for all others in every Place; and then I think I may most justly demand some Evidence of the Needfulness of these Things, and that he should shew some Order that is given to Church-Rulers to do so, or else he must say, God has not order'd all Things that are needful.

Now let us see how well he imitates my Way of arguing: God himself (says he) *appointed one Day Weekly for the thankful Remembrance of his Mercies, and so inclusively of his Mercies on the 5th of November, therefore 'tis needless for Men to appoint any other Day of the Week, that the 5th of November happens on in the*

Year, for the same thing. This is no shuffling doubtless in the Doctor's Account; God appointed one Day Weekly for the thankful Remembrance of the Mercies bestow'd in common on Men, or on his Church, and so inclusively for the 5th of November. Is this a common Mercy to Men, or to the Church of God? Or could God be suppos'd to appoint the Day for the solemn Commemoration of a Mercy, to be bestow'd on a particular Nation near 1600 Years after the Institution? If the Doctor can't here discern a difference, I may well say, as he in another Case, *I can't help, but must pity his Intellectuals.* To bless God for such common Mercies (which include all the Festivals of our Saviour) is the stated Work and Business of the Lord's Day; and therefore the Question is, Whether beside such stated ordinary and common Matter of Worship, the Providence of God may not give us ground for that which is occasional; and, Whether in such Cases we are not to regulate our selves, by the Occasions themselves? This is what I take notice of expressly afterward, which might have prevented this little turn upon me.

(2.) I said, *the Dissenters think they have good reason to believe, God did not intend that we should observe any such Religious Days as Men have appointed, because they find not that he has in his Word given us any Account of the Time, when the Things themselves happen'd.* Now the Doctor tells me, *the Stress of this Argument lies on this Supposition, that we are not to keep a Thanksgiving-Day for any Mercy, except on the exact Time or Day when it happen'd.* But with his good leave, the Stress of the Argument lies here, that if God had intended his Church should observe these Days, he would have given Information for the proper Time for the observing them, and would not have left us at such Uncertainties as he has actually done. Or to speak with Reference to our own Case, the Stress lies here, If God had intended we should observe such Days yearly, and should bless him then for such and such Mercies, as bestow'd at those particular times of the Year, he would not then have left us at such Uncertainties, as that we should not be able to know, whether in blessing we speak Truth or Falshood. And much less has he order'd our Saying so at a Time, when we have good reason to believe the Thing did not happen. But the Doctor adds immediately, *and if so, then I desire the Remarker to justify (if he can) their Observation of the Thanksgivings for the late glorious and happy Victories at Blenheim and Ramelies, since they were not appointed till some Weeks after.* I assure the Doctor I think nothing more easy: A plain Relation of the Case is a full Justification of our Practice. God gave us those glorious and happy Victories, and so his Providence did loudly call on us to bless and praise him; and accordingly our

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Gracious Queen soon after, by her Pious Proclamations, requir'd us to observe Days of Thanksgiving, and to bless God on these Accounts. This was not indeed on the respective Days on which the Victories themselves happen'd, when 'twas impossible we should have any knowledge of them, but in some convenient time after, while the Remembrance and Impression of them was fresh on our Minds, and we began very sensibly to discern the blessed Effects of them: And accordingly we hearken'd diligently to the Voice of God and the Queen, and willingly join'd in with those solemn Occasions: Which we think to be so rational in it self, and so entirely consistent with our Principles, that it can't but be strange, that any Man should find in his Heart to form an Objection from it against us. My Argument therefore runs thus, Stated Days of Worship, which all are bound to observe, are appointed by God himself, who has not (as is confess'd) appointed these in dispute: Occasional Days of Worship are to be regulated according as the Occasions, which the Providence of God gives, do direct. And therefore the Doctor has here nothing else to do, but to answer this plain and easy Question; What are those Occasions which have happen'd since God's appointing Stated Days of Worship, which do direct us to appoint Festivals for the Birth and Circumcision of Christ, &c.

The Doctor says, *I may see I am more squeamish than wise, if I can't on Christmas Day, and the Sunday after, say, with any tolerable Satisfaction, that God gave his only begotten Son to be as at this time born, &c.* But where is the Squeamishness in me, who am fully convinc'd it was not at that Time: Does the Doctor deny, that if I am in the right herein, there is just Reason to except against the Use of the Expression? Does he not insist on its being at that Time, to take off my Objection? *For as to the Reason he pretends for believing, that 'twas at quite another Season of the Year, 'tis of no weight with me against the universal Tradition of the Church.* But what's that to me, to make me see my Squeamishness? If the universal Tradition of the Church weighs more with him than solid Arguments, am I therefore to be concluded by it? Truly I rely very little on Traditions, which were so very uncertain, that even in the 2d and 3d Centuries, the Contenders on both Sides with equal Assurance laid Claim to them; as in the Controversy about Easter in Pope Victor's, and that about the baptizing of those who had been baptiz'd by Hereticks in Pope Stephanus's Time: And especially I rely very little on a Tradition which perhaps was never heard of till the fourth Century. The Doctor adds, *That he believes that I will be far from paying my self any such deference to the Opinion*
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of a single Person, how learned soever, as I would have him pay in this Point. But I appeal'd not to the Opinion, but to the Arguments of that learned Author; which I do not expect to see answer'd any other way than that the Doctor takes, I mean by denying the Conclusion. But if it be any Objection, that 'tis the Opinion of a single Person, I can easily remove that, by referring him to Dr. Lightfoot, Vol. 2. p. 107. and to Lydyat, another very learned Countryman of our own, whom I shall have occasion to mention afterward; and to several others.

(3.) I said, *the Dissenters don't like the way in which these came into the Church.* This Remark is to be consider'd not only by itself, but in the order in which it stands. The Dissenters think it needless to appoint such; and that God has not authoriz'd Men to appoint them, and that he has given us a good Intimation hereof by hiding from us the Times, when the Things themselves happen'd, Now these being first laid down, (and now a-fresh vindicated) I say the mistaken ground of bringing them in, and the mischievous Effect of them (which I urg'd in that Remark also, tho' the Doctor takes no notice of it) is a very good Argument against them. And thus the Doctor may see a wide difference between my Objection, and that of *the Papists against the Reformation.* I would fain know, whether he does not think we in this Nation had great need and just warrant to Reform? And whether the Will of God is not more clearly reveal'd against such Tyranny, Superstitions, and Idolatries, as are practis'd in the Romish Church, than it is that Church-Rulers have a Power to appoint these Religious Festivals? And whether he can charge such mischievous Effects on the Reformation, as I do from Mr. Joseph Mede charge on the Festivals?

The Doctor says, *My Assertion that the Festivals were brought in by way of accommodating the Christian Religion to the Heathen, is false:* But takes no notice of the Evidence I gave of the Truth of it. I suppose he thinks he sufficiently confutes me, by what he brings to prove my other Assertion false, *That the three first Ages before the Empire became Christian were entirely on our side.* And here indeed he alledges his Proof: But I think any one may see, that in that Remark I had a principal Regard to the Festivals of the Apostles. But however, on the first Perusal of the printed Copy, I thought the Words might be understood in a greater Latitude than I design'd them, and therefore immediately order'd among the Errata it should be thus alter'd, that they were *evidently in a great measure so*; and alledg'd to my Friend, as my Reason for that Alteration, the Letter the Doctor refers to concerning the Martyrdom of Polycarp, and Tertul-

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lian de Cor. And accordingly it is printed in the Second Edition, before the Doctor's Examination came out : Tho' after all, a little Candour to interpret the Passage, as I design'd it, only with relation to the Festivals of the Apostles, would afford a sufficient Apology for my Sincerity and Ingenuity, in using the Expression as it was at first printed. And as to *Justin Martyr*, I know well about what Time he liv'd ; nor did I cite him as an Evidence for more than his own Time, alledging, *it were easy to collect other Testimonies* : But I appeal'd to *Justin*, because he is an Author I have a great value for ; as a noble Witness of the great Simplicity of the most *Primitive Times*, which I long to see restor'd.

The Doctor says, *other Festivals were observ'd in the three first Ages, before the Empire became Christian.* I grant there were some, such as *Easter* and *Whitsontide* ; and as to these I had said in my Letter, p. 31. *That these happening always on a Lord's Day, were thought by us to be holy enough by God's Institution, &c.* I grant there were likewise Festivals of the Martyrs, as the Doctor alledges ; but yet these do not come home to our Controversy, for these were not such as our Brethren contend for : And tho' it should be suppos'd that God did by his Providence give them Occasion, or call them to observe such Days, yet this will not help in our Case, on an Account I mention'd before. And indeed about the latter end of the second, or the beginning of the third Century, this very Practice was not free from Superstition, as may be seen by those Words of *Tertullian*, *Oblationes pro defunctis, pro Natalitiis an una die facimus.* De Cor.

Next I am refer'd to *Dr. Cave's Primitive Christianity*, from which Book I acknowledge I learn'd many Things, and would willingly consult him, if I had it by me. But I suppose I appear ready enough to grant what *Dr. Cave* can alledge from thence ; and I doubt not, if the Doctor had given an Account of the Primitive Christians observing any other of the Days in dispute besides *Christmas-day*, the Doctor would have given us an Hint of them, as well as he does of that. And let it be suppos'd, that there are some *Footsteps of the Antiquity of Christmas-day in the second Century*, (which I question very much) I ask the Doctor, whether those Footsteps do all certainly look one way ? Do we not find by the express Testimony of *Clemens Alexand.* that some said that Christ was born on the 24th or 25th of the Egyptian Month *Parmuthi* ; others said that 'twas on the 25th of *Pachon* ; tho' *Lydyat* observes that neither of those did answer to our 25th of December. *Vid. Emend. Temp.* 156, 157, & *ejusdem Can. Chron.* p. 88, 89. Now what can a Man build on

Strom. Lib. i. p.
340.

on such Footsteps as these? Here are no Evidences of their observing such a Feast, but several contrary Traditions concerning the Day on which Christ was born; and if the Footsteps were so dark in the second Century, I would fain know how they did by length of Time grow so much more plain in the fourth Century, as to give the Doctor ground to call it the universal Tradition of the Church. Or how come they in the 4th Century to be more certain of the Matter than those of the second? Nay, if this Matter be so clear, how come they to have different Traditions even in the fourth Century, and that well advanc'd too? How came some to look on the 6th of *January* to be the Day, while others judg'd it was the 25th of *December*? And the same *Lydiate* says, 'tis certain the common Opinion was not started till about the Year of the Gospel 360. And that is 29 Years later in the common *Æra*. The Doctor adds, *And that if (Christmas-day) was kept before the Empire became Christian, the said learned Author gives a sad Instance, that under Dioclesian Multitudes of Christians being met together to celebrate the said Festival, they were all (together with the Church wherein they were assembled) burn'd to Ashes by the said Emperor's Command.*

This Story is related by *Nicephorus Collisus*, lib. 7. c. 6. But if Dr. *Cave* has no better Author to vouch for it than he, he is an Author on whose Credit I can't much depend, since he appears excessively fond of a Fable: And whether this be such let the Reader judge, when I have set down one Circumstance of it; and that is, that there were no less than Twenty Thousand come together in that Church, and destroy'd with it. And I leave it to the Reader to judge, whether it is probable, that the Christians at that Time can be suppos'd to have any Churches of that size, as to be able to contain at once 20000 People, or that so many could be suppos'd to come together ordinarily to worship in one Place. I shall only add, that as *Eusebius* (tho' he is large in his Account of the Persecution) says nothing of the Story, so there is good Reason from him to believe it to be false. For as he says, that the Numbers of the Martyrs were greatest in *Africa, Mauritania, Thebais* and *Egypt*. *Hist. Eccles. lib. 8. c. 6.* We may imagine by his Account of *Thebais*, that he knew nothing of this famous Story. For concerning the Persecution there, he goes no farther than this, "That sometimes Ten, sometimes
" Twenty, Thirty, or near Threescore, or sometimes an Hundred Men, with their Wives and Children, suffer'd in one
" Day. *Ibid. c. 9.* See *Dodwell de Paucitate Martyrum, Sect. 90.* Who did not, I suppose, think this Story worth his Notice, tho' 'tis as much against his Argument as mine. In my fourth Remark, I speak of some other Days, and say, we think we have plain

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Evidence, that the greatest Use that has been made of them, has been to revile and abuse us, and to exasperate the People against us without Cause: And therefore we don't think fit to joyn with those who for this end use them.

This, the Doctor says, is a pitiful and mean Argument; but if it be, I am sure the Doctor is even with me, for he has return'd a much more pitiful and mean Answer to it. *Because (says he) another does not keep a Fast-day as he ought, is this a Reason why I should not keep it at all? May not I keep it as I ought, whatever others do?* But what's this to the Purpose? I deny any Obligation I am under to observe those Days; and therefore nothing but Prudence can here be suppos'd to dictate my observing them; and I assure the Doctor I can't see what Prudence would, by observing them, be discover'd: For when I see that the chief Use of them is to foment Animosities, and to exasperate People against me and all of my Mind with groundless Charges, my joining with them might justly be interpreted an owning the Charges themselves to be true; which I think would become none, but one of a mean and pitiful Spirit. A Man ought rather by his Carriage to shew a just Neglect of such Methods, and testify his utter dislike of them; and so not join with (but pity) those who for such Ends observe them.

But he will enquire into the Justness of the Accusation, and asks, *Whether the setting forth to the People the great Hainousness of Rebellion in general, and the peculiar and transcendent Hainousness of the Sin of that Day, &c. is a reviling me and my Party?* And adds, *If it be, 'tis surely our own Faults, as being still of the same Principles, and still ready to act over again the same Villanies, if we had Occasion and Opportunity.* I answer, this is not fair, the Design of the Day being not so much to render the Sin of the Day, as the Persons of the Dissenters odious. And here I might use the Doctor's way of arguing; there is nothing more common among their People, than to cry out against the Presbyterians for cutting off the King's Head; and this their Teachers have taught them: And therefore since this is notoriously false and unjust, the Doctor's Argument is quite spoil'd; and indeed the end of his using it was the very same I had charg'd them with, viz. the exasperating the People against us without Cause; and so he has by the discovery of himself confirm'd the Truth of what I asserted. And there are several of themselves, who are (if they are fairly represented) so convinc'd of this, as to wish that Day wholly laid aside. If I may speak freely my mind, I always look on an *English* Parliament as the Security of the Rights and Privileges of *English* Subjects; and 'tis their Business to look after these, and to withstand all unjust Inroachments. And that

the Parliament and People of *England* may oppose a Prince who acts against the fundamental Laws of the Land, will not be deny'd, I suppose, by any that approve of the late Revolution. But when once a Guard comes to be set on the Parliament-house, and at pleasure the Members are let in or kept out, our Constitution is broken; and such Men who pretend by those Means to oppose Tyranny and Oppression, are themselves the greatest Tyrants and Usurpers. And this I take to be the Method evidently us'd by King *Charles's* Enemies to take off his Head; which was done by a *Juncto* of Men, and can't be look'd on as a National Act, and especially as the Act of the Presbyterians, on whom 'tis freely charged, since their Ministers did (openly, and in Print, to their great hazard and danger) then protest against it, as I suppose the Doctor can't but know. And I desire him to tell me next time, whether he has ever inform'd his People of this, that they might be undeceiv'd, and not unjustly condemn the Innocent. Now since the Matter stands thus, is it not unjust we should be so slander'd, as we ordinarily are on that Day? Or can any Man think it unreasonable that we refuse to have Fellowship with any in such Designs.

As to the *Dissenters* loyal Principles, tho' they have made less noise about them than some of their Neighbours, yet I would never fear the Verdict of any Judge, who would impartially compare their Principles and Practices with the noisy Doctrine of the Church-men, about Passive-Obedience and Non-Resistance, and their Concurrence in the late Revolution. No one need be jealous of Dissenters, while they are permitted to enjoy the Rights of reasonable Creatures, and good Subjects; nay, and a long Train of Sufferings patiently endur'd, is an abundant Evidence of the Peaceableness of their Spirits. But we have seen that notwithstanding the mighty din about Loyalty to the Prince, the Principles of others would not suffice to keep them quiet on the Appearance and Approach of Danger.

And as to a *satisfactory Proof of the Loyalty of our Principles*, we are not concern'd to give such Men as the Doctor Satisfaction; he shews himself too unreasonable to admit it. But we are able to satisfy our Gracious Queen, whose Throne is founded on those Principles we have all along maintain'd, which the Dons of the Church wou'd have perswaded the King to believe they deny'd; a Queen who has no Enemies lurking amongst us, but who reigns in all our Hearts, and is not insulted by any of us with threatening Memorials for her wise and prudent Management of Affairs, own'd by God with the most glorious Successes, and by all good Men with the greatest Admiration and Thankfulness.

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But he asks, *What's this Excuse to other Fasting Days, as Ash-Wednesday, Good-Friday, &c.* I answer, That 'tis not needful each Remark should contain an Answer to every thing; 'tis sufficient if all my Remarks together do answer all that's alledg'd against us: And therefore tho' this Remark is indeed nothing to those other Fasting-days, and was never design'd against them, yet he will find enough in the other Remarks against them.

In my Fifth Remark, I say, *We own there may be, beside what's ordinary and common, some peculiar Reasons for Prayer and Fasting, or for Praise and Thanksgiving:* This (he says) is enough to his Purpose. Very well then: Much Good may't do him; I see no Cause to retract it. He says, *Surely the Light of the Gospel's a National Blessing, as well as the Fifth of November.* Undoubtedly 'tis so; and the Doctor is very far from mistaking my Opinion. But the Light of the Gospel, and all those other things, which are made the Occasions of the Solemn and Holy-days in dispute, are common Mercies to the whole Christian Church, and the praising God for these, I suppose God has already appointed a solemn Weekly Day for. But, as I have shewn already, the Fifth of November is of quite another nature. Besides, tho' I allow'd that our Governours might call us to observe such a Day on a National Account, yet I did not lodge the Matter wholly in them, but suppos'd it to belong to the Governours of every particular Church to judge, whether the Days appointed were proper or no.

The Doctor had charg'd us *with being carnal, in being more concern'd for Success against the French King, than for the inestimable Victory obtain'd by Christ.* A Charge so unreasonable and ill grounded, that I can't but wonder he should not now have drop'd it. 'Tis really hard, that a Concern against the French King, (the most bloody Persecutor of the Church of God, from whose Power the Protestant Interest has been in such eminent danger these many Years) should be represented as an Argument of Men's being carnal, since the like Concern is so visible in the Pen-men of the Psalms, and other Parts of Holy Scripture. I had answer'd the Doctor, *That the contrary was evident, inasmuch as we observ'd one Day Weekly for the one, and only one Day Yearly for the other:* This, the Doctor says, is a *sophistical and bantering way of stating the Point*; tho' nothing can be more plain and clear: But let us see whether he has not stated it exactly according to the Rules of Sophistry, wherein I must own he has a Talent vastly beyond me.

He says therefore, *The Point, according to my Principle, stands thus: The Dissenters do one Day Weekly, namely, every Sunday, bless God for his Mercies in general; and therefore for his Mercies*

in giving us Success against the French as well as those of Christ's Redemption: But now beside these 52 Sundays in the Year, they do not refuse to keep one other particular Thanksgiving-Day (or more if there be occasion) for Success against the French; whereas they refuse to do the like in reference to the Particulars of our Redemption; and therefore whereas they bless God for his Spiritual Mercies in Christ but 52 times in the Year, they bless God for his Temporal Mercies 53 times in the Year, or oftner.

Spectatum admissi risum teneatis Amici?

Does not the Doctor see that the Stress lies on the keeping a Day on some Account? Does he think the Dissenters keep the Lord's-Day on the Account of the French King? Does he not know that they hold that the Observation of it has no manner of regard to him, but is equally necessary whether he is or is not in the World; whether he is a Friend or an Enemy? The great Design therefore of the Day, and that which God has set a-part, and the Dissenters do observe it for, is the blessing and praising God for his Mercies, as of Creation, so especially of Redemption by Christ? And not for Success against the French King; tho' 'tis no ways improper to take notice of that on those Days. I might add, that on such particular Thanksgiving days, when we bless God for temporal Mercies, 'tis not improper to express our Thankfulness for those that are spiritual; nor is that omitted by the Dissenters. I could retort the Doctor's own Argument on him, and tell him, that on all the Sundays in the Year, and on all the other Fasts and Festivals prescrib'd in the Book of Common Prayer, as well as on such particular Days of Fasting and Thanksgiving, they pray to God against the French; and bless God for his Mercies in general, and so inclusively for Success against them; and consequently are by his own Argument equally carnal with the Dissenters. I profess, I'm sorry I'm forc'd to spend so many Words on such trifling Sophistry. But I proceed to

His Ninth Assertion, which relates to *Obedience to Church-Rulers*; which, he says, *I do by consequence grant*: And not to multiply Words, I do not only implicitly, but expressly now grant, that every good Christian is bound to obey the (rightful and proper) Rulers of the Church in all things not sinfully commanded by them. As the Doctor in pursuit of this refers to his other Letter, so do I to mine. *I said, the Rulers of the Church, whom the Christian's bound to obey, are the Rulers of that particular Church to which he belongs.* The Doctor says, *On this Supposition he thinks it will hold good, that the Rules and Orders of their* Church

Church ought to be observ'd by the People, for as much as they are made by the Consent (actual or virtual) of the Ministers of the several Parishes within this Kingdom. But, (1.) How does the Doctor prove, that a Representative Body has a Power to make Laws for all the particular Churches in this Nation? This is a Matter of so great Consequence, as to need a very clear Proof; and I declare, I'm not able to discern any Countenance it has by the Rules and Orders prescrib'd in the Scriptures for Church-Government. (2.) Supposing there were some Foundation for the Legislative Power of a representative Body, a Convocation is so very unequal and unfair a one, it could not speciously pretend to't. The Members of the Convocation, which are not chosen by the Ministers of the Parishes, are, I think, at least two to one of those that are: So that tho' all the Representatives of the Parishes should be against a thing, and so the Ministers of the Parishes neither give an actual, nor virtual Consent to any thing to be enacted by the Convocation, the other Members shall be able to carry it in spite of all they can do. And as to the Doctor's comparing a Parliament and a Convocation, 'tis of no moment; for the Form of Church-Government is not so precarious a thing, or so refer'd to the Pleasure and Choice of Men, as the Form of Civil-Government is.

In the next place, I started an Objection against a National-Church; and said, That there are but two sorts of Churches mention'd in the New Testament, the Catholick Church, and particular Churches; and deny'd, that any National Church is so much as mention'd there. He says, if I mean as to their very Names, then the two former are no more to be found there than the latter: If I mean as to the Things themselves, then he affirms the latter to be found in the New Testament as well as the former. I think my Meaning is sufficiently plain, that the Name Church is never apply'd but to what we call the Catholick Church, or to a Particular Church: That the several Churches in a Nation are never spoken of under the Name of a Church; and therefore in the New-Testament a National Church is not to be found, either Name or Thing. I don't think the Doctor will be so hardy as to deny that the Name Church is expressly apply'd to the two former; and consequently those two sorts of Churches which I acknowledg'd, must be own'd, as to the Things themselves, to be found in the New-Testament. Now as he affirms a National Church (as to the thing it self) to be found there too, it belongs to him to prove it: And accordingly he attempts it thus; For as the several Cities and Towns of Crete make up the Nation of Crete, so why should not the several Churches in the said Towns and Cities make up the National Church of Crete? But the greatest Absurdity in the World may be

be prov'd after this rate, if to ask, why it should not be true be a sufficient Proof. What's this to me, why it should not be so, who am only concern'd to know whether it actually is so? But however, tho' it can't be reasonably requir'd of me, I will tell him why it should not be thus, and that is, because the Constitution of a Church is not founded on humane Contracts, but on a Divine Institution: And therefore where there is no Appearance of a Divine Institution of any Society, 'tis unreasonable to call that a Church. Farther, as the Doctor charges me so frequently with Shuffling and Sophistry, it may not be amiss to give a little hint of the Doctor's in this Place. An Argument from an Allusion or Similitude is not reckon'd demonstrative, an Allusion will illustrate a Matter well prov'd, but proves nothing; and such is the Doctor's Argument here: And however, if Men will use these kind of Arguments, they ought to put them fair, and then the Doctor's Argument should run thus; If the several Cities and Towns in Crete, make up the National City or Town of Crete, why should not the several Churches in the said Cities or Towns make up the National Church of Crete?

His next Argument is thus express'd; *Again it is not to be doubted, but that in Corinth, Ephesus, &c. the Christians made up more than one Congregation; and yet 'tis manifest St. Paul writes to them (not as so many distinct or particular Congregations, to be govern'd each by its own Rules, but) as all united into one common Society, to be govern'd by the same common Rules.* The Doctor says this is not to be doubted of, but there are several who did not know so much before: I think this may deserve a fuller Proof; and indeed as to the Church of Corinth, it seems pretty plain, that they were not more than one Congregation, from 1 Cor. 11. 20. And a great deal has been said on this Head by the Author of the Enquiry into the Constitution, Discipline, Unity and Worship of the Primitive Church. But let it be suppos'd, that in some of those particular Churches mention'd in the New Testament, there were more worshipping Congregations than one; I am sure I never asserted the contrary, but left room for such a Supposition, and never spoke of a Congregational but of a particular Church. This must be a very weak Foundation to build a Diocesan, and much more a National Church upon. For if the Doctor asks me, (as he does a little after) *If two Churches (rather Congregations) may be united together into one common Society, to be govern'd by the same common Laws, why not two hundred?* I will give him my Reason, and 'tis this; I suppose the Government of every Church, lodg'd, as it was in the Church at Ephesus, in the Body of Presbyters set over it, and judge, that as every Presbyter had a Right to vote in all Cases to be determin'd by them,

so

Is they govern'd the Church acting in one Body. Now where there are two or three Congregations, I can fairly suppose all such Cases as may need Determination, may easily be attended to by one such Body of Men: But I can't see how this could be, supposing there were two hundred Congregations to make up one Church; and especially where the Presbyters live so remotely as that they can't join together in the Government of the Church. And therefore tho' it were granted, that two or three Congregations in one City are stiled a Church in the New Testament, as being united under one Set of Governours; yet since I can never find all the Congregations of a whole Nation or Country stild by the Name of a Church, or suppos'd to be put under one Body of Governours, I can't allow the Notion of a National Church, or that two hundred or two thousand Congregations should make but one Church. So that to recapitulate, if a single Congregation be not allow'd to be the Limits of a Church, yet still the Limits of it must be fix'd by this, that it be not larger than can be well govern'd in all Matters by one Presbytery, made up of all the Presbyters in that Church, ordinarily joining and meeting together for the Government of it: And especially I hold this, in as much as we read not of any Appointment or Example of a Church govern'd by a chosen Body of Representatives. But let the Doctor remember, I make this Concession only in my own Name (and not in the Name of the Dissenters in general) being willing to argue upon it; and so it was in my own Name I spoke in that Place of my Letter we are now upon. I will only add, that in my Mind, it is much more natural to fix the Bounds of a Church by Persons being under one Set of Rulers, than by their being under one Set of Rules. For the Rules by which a Church is to be governed are common to all Christians; and I do not see that a Legislative (or any more than an Executive) Power can be prov'd to be lodg'd in Church-Rulers: And as Christ, the Head of the Catholick Church, is (as I may express my self) the *Principium Unitatis* of the Catholick Church, so may the Rulers of a particular Church thus conjoin'd, be consider'd as the *Principium Unitatis* thereof: But what is the Head, or *Principium Unitatis* of our National Church, perhaps will not be so easy to determine.

The Doctor's next Argument is taken from 2 Cor. 1. 1. *From which, he says, 'tis certain that St. Paul's Epistle to the Corinthians was not writ as design'd for no other Congregations than those in Corinth it self, (in which I am very fully of his Mind) but for all Achaia, of which Corinth was a principal City, as being all united in one common Society, and so making up what may be truly call'd a Provincial Church. But still this is but a may be: Nor does*

does the Doctor prove that it is so: How does he prove that all the Congregations of *Achaia* were united into one common Society. I profess I can't see here any shadow of an Argument: I think the Apostle evidently distinguishes the Church of *Corinth* from the Saints in the rest of *Achaia*. But I'll be so just as to set down the Words at length, and leave it to the Reader, to try whether he can discern more in it to the Doctor's Purpose than I am able to do; *Paul an Apostle of Jesus Christ, by the Will of God, and Timothy our Brother, to the Church of God which is at Corinth, with all the Saints in all Achaia.*

His next Argument is thus express'd; *Supposing after all that there was no such Grounds for a National Church, as there are in the New Testament, yet since there are evident grounds for it in the Old Testament, since the Church of the Jews (the Government whereof was appointed by God himself) was beyond Contradiction a National Church, one would think this alone was warrant enough to constitute a National Church.* The Stress of this Argument lies here, that what God constituted among the Jews, we have warrant to constitute among our selves. I thought we were to fetch our Notions of a Christian Church from the New Testament; and these kind of Arguments are, I confess, of no force with me: Besides, is there not good Reason to say, that as God did actually appoint a National Church among the Jews in the Old Testament, he could most easily have appointed the same among Christians in the New, if he had design'd there should be one: And therefore his appointing one among them, and not among us, is, I think, a good Argument against the thing it self.

Farther, if we once give way to this Argument, where shall we stop? Why must we not have one Temple and one High-Priest for this National Church? And I may well put the Doctor in mind of what he often alledges against me, that this Argument is urg'd by the Papists, for the Necessity of a visible Head of the Catholick Church: But, I think, Protestants generally do deny the Consequence from the National and Catholick Church of the Jews, to the Catholick Church of the Christians, as well as deny the Right of his Holiness to such a Headship: On that Supposition I do therefore still insist on a Proof of a National Church, and that a better one than the Doctor has yet given, or else I shall say he gives up the Cause.

And as to his defying me to give an Instance of any such Form of Church-Government as I contend for in Scripture, and for Antiquity: I answer, I defy him to give me any single Instance to the contrary in the *New-Testament*. And as to *Antiquity*, I need only to refer him to the ingenious Author of the Enquiry, where he will find a great many more; and if he has not that Author
by

by him, I need only refer him to what is commonly observ'd concerning the Matter in *Ignatius's Epistles*. And as to what he says of the *Reform'd Churches abroad*, I told him before, *I resolv'd to hold to the New Testament as my Rule in these Matters*, till I could find a better; and I confess he does not help me to discern they are so. And it may not be so hard as the Doctor imagines, to give a good account what has led the Reformed Churches to that Model, without supposing that Matter so plain as what such an Advocate, as the Doctor, can alledge so very little to prove.

Next the Doctor propounds a Question, which is, I confess, both serious and weighty; that is, *Whether*, supposing my Notions true, *we ought not for the Peace and Union of the Church, to submit to such their Authority, tho' usurped?* To which I answer, That 'tis then to be acknowledg'd, that as the Power usurp'd is not of God, it does not immediately bind: And the grand reason of my Submission can be no other, than the Appearance of more Good that I may do by submitting, than by not submitting; and that must be determin'd by Circumstances. I think the Doctor has not stated the Question amiss, when he says, *It is not whether a Christian is not bound to obey them; but this, Whether he is bound not to obey them*: And I am very glad the Doctor has given me this Opportunity of speaking my mind freely.

I say then, Supposing they did only enjoin things which I could safely practise, and did not require Subscription to such Matters as I can't believe true, and particularly did not require me to acknowledge (as I must if I subscribe the former part of the 20th Article) the Rightfulness of that Power which they claim: And supposing withal they left so much Power to particular Churches, as I think is necessary in order to their answering fully the true Ends of a Church, I should notwithstanding my Notions submit, tho' not so as to disown those who perhaps could not. But the Doctor may easily see by my Letters, that I look on this as widely different from our Case.

His next Assertion is, concerning *shewing Reverence to Churches*: And here the Doctor says, *I own his Assertion by Consequence; because I say that Command, Lev. 19. 30. is of as perpetual Obligation as the thing will bear: That as long as God has such a worldly Sanctuary (as is there meant) 'tis to be reverenc'd*. But how is this an owning his Assertion by Consequence, when I expressly deny that God has any such Sanctuary, and give plain Reasons of my Opinion, which the Doctor instead of refuting, says, *He fancies I am so weak as to have my Eye to*. Well, but he'll prove that *God has such Sanctuaries*; and his Argument is, *That all*

that essentially belongs to a Sanctuary is its being sanctified or set apart to God's Service. But this is mere Shuffling; for the Question is, Whether there be not a vast difference between God's sanctifying a Place, and setting it apart for his own Use and Service by his own special Institution and Command, and Man's pretending to sanctify a Place for God's Service, without any such Command. But I shall a little more distinctly consider this Matter.

1. Then I assert that it belongs to God alone to make a Place holy; and this God does, as I said, by his own Institution and Appointment. 'Tis not in the Power of Men to make any Place holy which God has not made so. The Tabernacle and Temple were not holy by any humane Consecration, but by the Appointment of God, and by his Presence in them; and these were either, or both of them, Grounds of Reverence. Now consider to what Purposes these were made holy, even to be the only Places of a great part of his Worship; which was confin'd and limited to them, and could no where else acceptably be perform'd: But now God is so far from esteeming any one place holy above another to any such purpose, that, on the contrary, our Saviour declares all that God requires is, that we worship him in Spirit and in Truth, without any regard to this or t'other place; and therefore any place, tho' it has been never so set apart, as the Doctor supposes, is holy enough to worship God in. and the Acceptableness of the Service has no manner of Dependence on any Distinction and Difference of Places.

2. I deny that any Place can now without Superstition be set apart or sanctified, with a Design that it should thereupon become more holy in it self than any other place: For if God does now make no such Distinction of Places, or look on one Place as in it self more holy (that is, as more necessary to be resorted to, in order to the acceptably serving God) than another, then Man can have no power to appoint, sanctify or set apart any place as such; and the contrary Apprehension is superstitious.

3. The setting therefore apart of any place for the Service of God, if it be done without such Superstition, can amount to no more than this, that such a particular place is chosen by Men as proper and convenient for them to assemble in for the Worship and Service of God, and that accordingly they resolve they'll apply it to that use. But after all the place it self signifies nothing, and in any other place if there be occasion, may Christians with equal Acceptance perform any Part of God's Worship: Which was very false concerning the Tabernacle and Temple. As Place is a necessary Accident of Worship, it may be

be said to be accidentally holy (if he will) by the Worship perform'd in it; and so any place, so us'd, in the time of Worship, is equally holy. And as God has no where commanded us to have the Places of our publick Worship appropriated to that use and no other, so I fear not to say, that 'tis very lawful to use for the Worship of God such Places as are ordinarily at other Times applied to other Uses; only Care should be taken to have Places of Worship as decent and convenient as may be: And where Peoples Circumstances will not suffer them to compass all that Decency and Conveniency that may be desirable, let them not think that the worshipping of God in Spirit and Truth, will be ever the less acceptable. And if the Doctor is offended at those Times, which by way of Derision he calls *godly*, let him take a Journey to *Cambridge* the next publick Commencement, and see how *St. Mary's* is then us'd; or let him next *Sturbridge Fair* repair thither, and see what an unsanctified Place in the Field, and in the Fair (which is as bad as a Market-house) is made use of for the publick Service of God. And thus, I hope, I have made it easie for the Doctor to see, that all his Arguments from the Jewish Temple are frivolous. I may with much more reason return him another Compliment, for that which he pass'd on me about *Baruch*; That I believe all sober and judicious Persons will think the Doctor has too mean and unworthy an Opinion of the Jewish Temple; (the Place God had himself chosen above all the Places on the Earth, the Place wherein he dwelt, and the glorious Type of the humane Nature of the Messiah) when he compares our Parish-Churches to it.

We are now got to the Doctor's last Instance; and here I had fully own'd to him the *Lawfulness of a Minister's receiving Pay*; which from several Passages he has drop'd concerning Mr. *Dowley* and the Dissenters, it appears most plainly he must have known to be their Opinion, tho' he insinuates a Charge of the contrary on them, as an Instance of their false Doctrine. I added, I suppos'd the Doctor had not his Eye here on the Divine Right that Gospel Ministers have to Tithes. And here he asks, *Whether it be not most unaccountable, that the Remarker could possibly make such a Supposition? How he could suppose, that I had not my Eye on the Divine Right of Tithes or Pay, when I had just mention'd that Divine Charter, which gives us such a Divine Right: 1 Cor. 9. 14. Even so hath the Lord ordain'd that they which preach the Gospel, should live of the Gospel.*

But I ask the Doctor, whether 'tis not most unaccountable, that he could possibly foist in Words, and make them mine, who never us'd them? Thus he does when he puts in those

Words, *OR PAY*; which how it could be done, but with a Design to make the Reader believe that his Adversary talk'd Nonsense, I can't imagine. Any one would see, if he had set down my Words fair, they were plain and easie; for by Tithes I understand what all the world means thereby, not *Pay in general*, but *such a particular sort of Pay*, that is, *the Tenths*, which God gave of old to those that attended his Service among the Jews, and which Clergy-men now enjoy in this Nation. I said therefore, *I thought the Doctor had not his Eye on any Divine Right that Gospel Ministers have to Tithes*; that is, this particular sort of Pay: And I had good Reason to say so, for, as I added, *that is quite another Question* (than what, I beseech the Doctor did he think I meant, but plainly that which I had granted concerning Pay in general) *which his Arguments do not meddle with*. This is a plain Concession that his Arguments do prove somewhat; and what can that be but a Minister's Right to pay, or that he should live of the Gospel; but as to the other, this determinate kind of Pay of the *Tenths*, I said his Arguments did not meddle with it; nor is there a Word of that Matter in the Text brought, or his whole Argument.

The Doctor at parting says, *In short, to do the Remarker Justice, he has plainly shown, that he knows full well how to gild a poisonous Pill, so as to tempt the common Reader to swallow it down very readily; and to prevent the ill Consequences thereof, I have spar'd no Application to prepare with all speed possible (what I hope will prove) a proper Antidote*. Perhaps the Doctor would be offended if I should overlook this Passage, or balk the Humour of it. And therefore I will acquaint the Reader, that I have taken the Poison carefully out of this Antidote, which might otherwise have been dangerous to those who had taken the Pill, which had no opposite Poison in it for the Antidote to work upon: And having again carefully examin'd the Ingredients of that Pill, I can recommend them as safe and wholesome; and I have now given it a second gilding, to render it the less offensive; and so wish it may work kindly, to dispose Persons to the exercise of more Charity towards the Dissenters than the Doctor's Principles allow!

I need say nothing of his Postscript, the things themselves have been consider'd in their several Places.

And thus, Sir, I have consider'd with as much Dispatch as I could, the Doctor's Examination, in which I am complimented all along by way of Contempt (I guess by the Doctor's Words, p. 2.) under the Title of the Remarker, tho' I profess I did not design the Title of *Remarks* as any way expressive of Disdain and Scorn to the Doctor, as he falsely conjectures.

I am not fond of boasting, but I think I have great Reason to acknowledge to the Doctor, that he has taken the most effectual Course to confirm the Dissenters in their Opinion, that the Remarks were not to be answer'd : For doubtless they will judge, that the Doctor would have thoroughly answer'd them if he could, and not at such a rate as he has now done : I hope the clear Evidence I have given of the Doctor's continual Shuffling will be a warning to the common Reader, and may help him in any of his other Writings hereafter, to see through his Sophistry, tho' I should my self take no notice of them ; and I profess this sort of Examinations will soon tempt me to think of using my time to better Purpose.

I am,

S I R,

Your Hearty

Friend and Servant,

Newberry, December
the 7th, 1706.

James Peirce.

POST.

POSTSCRIPT.

THE Design of this P.S. is, to inform the Reader of two things. 1. That since I sent this Letter to the Press, I desir'd a Friend to compare what I had written with relation to Dr. Cave's Testimony with his Book, which I could not do my self, not being able to procure it; and I find that I was not much mistaken in that Matter; for the Author whom Dr. Cave cites for that Story, is *Nicephorus Calistus*. He adds indeed *Simeon Metaphrastes*, who, tho' more ancient than the other, living about the beginning of the 10th Century, is an Author of no Credit, his Relations being most notoriously fabulous, as all grant. The decretal Epistles are also cited, but not as a sufficient Evidence; and indeed they are of no Credit: They were not heard of, says *Du Pin*, till the 9th Century; and one thing that he alledges particularly as an Evidence of the Forgery of that particular Epistle of *Telephorus*, refer'd to, is what is said in it about *Christmas*: *there is a Decree in it, says he, of the three Masses of Christmas, a Custom not so ancient as his time.* Dr. Cave mentions likewise *Theophilus of Casarea*; but as *Eusebius* has not given us any Fragments of his Epistle, I am at a loss to know where to find his Testimony: *Du Pin* says his Epistle is lost; and I dare say no very ancient Author will be found to vouch for it; so that I believe there will be found no Footsteps of *Christmas-day* in the 2d or 3d Century. The other days mention'd by him, as observ'd in these first Ages, are not the Days about which we dispute, or which I had a regard to in that Remark, viz. the Festivals of the Apostles. 2. I have hinted in my Letter some Reasons why I did not think the Dr. had fairly represented the Objections of the Dissenters, he had to do with; and am since inform'd that an Enquiry has been made among his Parishioners, and that they disown those Objections, and say they are of the Doctor's own devising, and therefore complain of their being abus'd by him.

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F I N I S.

A
DEFENCE
OF THE
REMARKS
ON
Dr. Wells's
LETTER
TO
Mr. DOWLEY.

PART II.

Being an Answer to Part II. Sect. I.
of the Doctor's Examination.

In a Fourth LETTER, Address'd to the Doctor.

The Second Edition.

By James Peirce.

L O N D O N,
Printed by J. Humfreys, for John Lawrence,
at the Angel in the Poultry. 1711.



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A D E F E N C E of the R E M A R K S on Dr. Wells's L E T T E R to Mr. Dowley.

Reverend Sir,

TH O' I do not well understand the Reason why you are pleas'd to break your Answer to me (who have already so fully express'd my Mind in my Remarks) into so many distinct Parts as you now propose, yet I resolve to comply with your Motion, and shall accordingly proceed to consider what you now offer on the first Head of the second Part of your Letter.

I need not speak particularly to the State of the Question according as you have propos'd it ; because I think every thing in it will come under Consideration in speaking to your Propositions. But as you have been pleas'd to represent your Scheme, and the Arguments by which you confirm it, in several connected Propositions, after a Mathematical Manner, which is a Method I do not dislike for my self, I shall herein imitate you, and shall set before you my Apprehensions concerning the Controversy, according to the Foot on which you have set it, in such Kind of Propositions, and shall wait for your Thoughts of them ; and after I have thus represented my Opinion, I shall consider how far your Propositions do concern the present Controversy.

My Propositions are these ;

I. That no Office can be justly look'd upon as Sacred, which God has not appointed.

II. That the Offices which God has appointed, and the Powers which he has respectively annex'd to them, are inseparable.

III. That 'tis only by the Scriptures we are to judge, what Offices are of Divine Appointment, and what Powers do respectively belong to them, and when they are regularly convey'd. Therefore,

IV. Whenever a Person is rightly ordain'd to any Office of Divine Appointment, he is to be look'd on as invested with all those

those Powers which do belong to that Office according to the Scriptures, and which appear from thence to have been annex'd by God himself to it; as appears from *Propos. II. and III.* Therefore,

V. If the Scripture does give to Presbyters the Power of Ordination, then all those who are rightly ordain'd to the Office of Presbyters, are to be look'd on as having the Power of Ordination; by *Prop. IV.*

VI. Distinct Names in Scripture do not imply necessarily distinct Offices; but one and the same Office may be express'd by two or more different Names: Therefore,

VII. If Men, through a Mistake, do judge two distinct Names to signify two distinct Offices, when they really signify but one, and accordingly do ordain Persons, under those distinct Names, as to distinct Offices, the Persons so ordain'd must, notwithstanding their Mistake, have both the same Powers inherent in each, and be equally invested in one and the same Office. This appears from *Prop. II, IV, and VI.* Therefore,

VIII. If the Office of a Bishop and a Presbyter are exactly the same, and these are only two different Names us'd to express one and the same kind of Officer, they who are ordain'd to the Office of a Bishop, and they who are ordain'd to the Office of a Presbyter, have equal Power and Authority lodg'd in them; as appears by the VIIth *Prop.*

IX. The Names of a Bishop and Presbyter do not in the Scripture signify Persons in distinct Offices, but are only different Names to express one and the same kind of Officer: Therefore by *Prop. VIII.* they who are ordain'd Bishops, and they who are ordain'd Presbyters, have equal Power and Authority lodg'd in them, and consequently if Bishops have the Power of Ordination, Presbyters have also, *Q. E. P.*

X. Again, the Scripture does not distinguish two Offices, one with the Power of Ordination, and Preaching and Administring Sacraments; and the other with the Power only of Preaching, and administring Sacraments. Therefore,

XI. Whoever is rightly ordain'd to any sacred Office, to which belongs the Power of Preaching, and administring Sacraments, must have the Power of Ordination also, *Q. E. P.* Again,

XII. Christ left but one standing Office of Rulers over his Church.

XIII. This one Office was appointed in the Persons of the Apostles.

XIV. The Apostles are to be consider'd in their Extraordinary Capacity, and so have no Successors; and in their ordinary Capacity, as to the standing and permanent Parts of their Office, and in that alone they have Successors.

XV. The

XV. The Scripture never gives us any Account, that the standing and permanent Part of the Apostle's Office was divided into several distinct Offices, in which they were to be succeeded partly by one, and partly by another sort of Officers. Therefore,

XVI. They who succeed them, succeed them in the whole of their Ordinary Capacity, or of the standing and permanent Part of their Office, and have all that Power which belong'd to their Office as such.

XVII. The Apostles, consider'd in their ordinary Capacity, and with respect to the permanent Parts of their Office, were Presbyters. Therefore,

XVIII. All those who are rightly ordain'd to the Office of Presbyters, do succeed them in the whole of their ordinary Capacity, or of the permanent Parts of their Office.

XIX. The Power of Ordination did belong to the Apostles according to their ordinary Capacity, and was one of the standing and permanent Parts of their Office. Therefore,

XX. All those who are rightly ordain'd to the Office of Presbyters, do succeed them in the Power of Ordination, as appears by Prop. XVIII. and XIX. *Q. E. P.*

N. B. I had in my first Letter, p. 45. and 58. from Bishop Beveridge, stated the Question between us thus, *Whether the Government of every Church is lodg'd in the Hands of a single Person, or in the Hands of a Plurality or Presbytery.* I took it for granted (because generally own'd by our Episcopal Brethren) that the Power of Government and of Ordination go together, and therefore endeavour'd to prove, that the Power of Government was lodg'd in the Hands of a Plurality or Presbytery: whence, according to your own Notion, the Power of Ordination must belong to them also; and so the Cause of our Episcopacy falls to the Ground, which supposes a Bishop the sole Governour in a Diocesan (reckon'd by them the lowest Species of a) Church. And therefore now according to this view of the Controversy, I lay down these Propositions following.

XXI. The Power of Government and Ordination are left in the same Hands, by the Concession of the Episcoparians.

XXII. The Power of Government in the first Church instituted by Christ, and his then only Church at *Jerusalem*, was lodg'd in the Hands not of a single Person, but of a Plurality.

XXIII. The Apostles in founding other Churches, took the same Course, and lodg'd the Government of every particular Church in the Hands of a Plurality.

XXIV. The Power therefore of Ordination does not belong to a single Person, but to a Plurality. *Q. E. P.*

Perhaps some may think, some of the foregoing Propositions

are overthrown by *Ephes. 4. 11.* where we read of Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, and Pastors and Teachers : But I think 'tis very evident that neither Apostles, Prophets, nor Evangelists, have Successors in those things, in which they were distinguish'd from ordinary Ministers ; and if Apostles, the Principal and Chief of all these were Presbyters, as to their ordinary Capacity, and the standing permanent Part of their Office, the Prophets and Evangelists who were inferiour to them, can't be suppos'd to be more.

And thus, Sir, I have endeavour'd to follow your Example, and to lay down my Opinion in the foregoing Propositions. I can't but think you are oblig'd to make this Point very plain to the People, since you lay so great a Stress on it, in the Matters of Salvation ; and therefore tho' I do not dislike, as I hinted before, your Method with reference to my self, yet I can't think it very fair in you to use it, when you seem to own it to be above the common Capacity : And that I may make things as plain as I can, give me leave, for the sake of such, to give this plain and short Representation of my Opinion : That, whoever are rightly ordain'd to the Office of Presbyters, have all the Power which God in his Word has given to Presbyters ; but God has, in his Word, given the Power of Ordination to Presbyters, therefore Presbyters have the Power of Ordination.

I shall be hereafter ready, God willing, to consider what you shall alledge in opposition to my Propositions, and shall now come to give you my Thoughts concerning those you have advanc'd, though you may easily guess from what I have already laid down, what my Apprehensions are concerning them.

I. Your first Proposition, I conceive, does not affect the Controversy. For the Controversy being, *Whether Presbyters have valid Authority to ordain as well as Bishops*, if it appear they have, Presbyterian Ordination will be safe and valid, tho' this Proposition be granted, and therefore to avoid the lengthning our Dispute, I shall answer your other Propositions, on Supposition of the Truth of this ; *That the Validity of any Ordination does immediately depend on the valid Authority of him or them, by whom is perform'd the said Ordination.* You add, Therefore,

II. *The Validity of Presbyterian Ordination, practis'd at the Reformation, does not immediately depend on the valid Authority of those call'd Presbyters in the New Testament, because by them was not perform'd the said Ordination.*

I answer, the Validity of Presbyterian Ordination, according to our present Hypothesis, depends on two things ; (1.) The Validity of the Ordination of those Presbyters (who did ordain) to the Office of Presbyters ; for if they were themselves rightly ordain'd to that Office, they were thereby invested with all the Powers,

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powers, which according to the Scriptures do belong to that Office. (2.) The Validity of Presbyterian Ordination (supposing the Ordainers rightly ordain'd themselves) depends immediately on the Power annex'd by Divine Appointment to the Office of Presbyters. And therefore if the Presbyters in the *New Testament* had valid Authority to ordain, those, who are rightly constituted Presbyters, have a Power to ordain others also.

And therefore this is what I did and do still insist on; that the Power and Authority belonging to Presbyters is to be judg'd of by the Scriptures, and not *by the Sense in which the Word Presbyters was us'd at the Reformation.*

And by this, I suppose, you may see that my first Remark stands good, and that 'tis with good Reason, I said, *the Scriptures are our only Rule, viz.* by which we are to judge of the Power that belongs to this Office; and as this depends on a Divine Institution and Appointment, it is always the same; so that your distinction is here of no moment. For what tho' the Scriptures be not *the immediate Rule, whereby we are to judge all things*; what tho' it supposes the Light of Nature, by which we judge of many things, what tho' 'tis by Sense and Testimony we are to judge of Matters of Fact; yet 'tis clear, we cannot judge of the Good or Evil, of the Validity or Invalidity of any Act, whose Good or Evil, Validity or Invalidity, depends on some positive Institution, but by the Institution it self, and that can be learn'd only from the Scripture; and therefore I take it for certain, that the Scriptures are here immediately concern'd, and that 'tis by them only we can determine this Matter, and I can't allow the receding one Jot from that Rule in this Controversy.

III. Your Third Proposition is closely connected with the second, and is answer'd in speaking to it.

IV. Your Fourth Proposition will be spoken to under the other Propositions, which contain the Particulars of it.

V. As to your 5th Proposition, you may easily imagine what I say to it, both from my Remarks, and from my Propositions. I flatly deny the Doctrine of the threefold Order to be true, and I can't see, why you should not have apply'd your self immediately to the Proof of it; and therefore till you have prov'd this, my Second Remark *is of considerable Weight.* For since you own that Presbyters at the time of the Reformation were Officers of Divine Appointment, I lay it down for certain, that 'tis from the Divine Appointment or Commission, we are to judge of the Power which belongs to them.

You here add, *That in my Third Remark I quite mistake the Point debated. For you do by no Means say that Presbyters at the*
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Reformation, had not the Power of Ordination, because their Ordainers did not design to give it them, but because the Power of Ordination did not belong to them by Divine Institution.

Let any impartial Person judge, whether I mistook the Point debated according to your stating it. How could the Controversy here in this Place be about the Divine Institution, when in the beginning of your Argument you waved the Consideration of the Holy Scriptures? How could I think you would pretend to argue from a Divine Institution, without having recourse to the Holy Scriptures, where alone that Institution can be found? I leave it to your self, who must be suppos'd to understand the Design of your own Argument best, to account for this.

But however let the Reader consider those Words of yours, *That whosoever would judge aright of the Validity or Invalidity of (what has been ever since the Reformation call'd) Presbyterian Ordination, must in the first Place duely inform himself, in what Sense the Word Presbyter was taken at the said time of the Reformation, what Order of Ministry was then known or distinguish'd by that Name, and with what Ministerial Power those then call'd Presbyters were invested by Virtue of the Ordination they themselves had receiv'd.* Letter to Mr. D. p. 22. I am willing to leave it to any candid and impartial Reader to judge, whether these Words did not give me sufficient Cause to represent you as arguing from the Sense of those Times, what Notions were then receiv'd of the Office of Presbyters, and what Power they were then suppos'd to receive, and consequently their Ordainers did design to give; for if the Sense of the Men in those Times is here to come into Consideration, certainly the Sense of the Ordainers themselves is principally to be regarded. And if so, then that Consequence I mention'd, will naturally and necessarily follow: But if you argue from a Divine Institution, which I could not when I wrote the Remarks, (nor can I now) discern, I am willing to debate this Matter farther with you, as that by which alone this part of the Controversy can be decided.

VI. Your Sixth Proposition falls with the Fifth, and therefore I need not speak particularly to it.

VII. Your Seventh Proposition I allow.

VIII. Your Eighth Proposition is this; *According to the Doctrine of the twofold Order it necessarily follows that of the three Orders (which did obtain, and can by Ecclesiastical History be demonstrated from the Apostle's Time to the Reformation) the Middle Order, to which the Name of Presbyters was all along appropriated, for the time above specify'd, was not of Divine or Apostolical Institution.*

To this I answer ; That whereas many did by mistake judge the Offices of a Bishop and of a Presbyter to be two distinct and different Offices, when they were really but one and the same according to Divine Institution ; so those who were ordain'd to the Office of a Bishop, or of a Presbyter, were ordained really to the same Office, and consequently were invested with the same Power. And therefore the whole Matter does depend on the Divine Institution, and not on Ecclesiastical History, since 'tis by the Divine Institution we are to correct the Mistakes of After-times ; tho' I think Ecclesiastical History affords several considerable Testimonies on our side, and some of them more ancient than what our Adversaries can alledge. But I am willing to shorten the Dispute, and therefore refer wholly to the Divine Institution.

This Answer to your Eighth Proposition is a full Answer to all your other Propositions which follow ; and therefore I need not speak particularly to them.

My 4th Remark against which you object, appears from what has been said to be of considerable Weight. For if the Sense of the Times before the Reformation is to be consider'd, so is the Sense of the Times after the Reformation, when those Presbyters (I spoke of) were ordain'd : And therefore if according to the Sense of the Times after the Reformation, and especially if according to the Sense of the Ordainers, those Presbyters had by Divine Institution the Power of Ordination, your own Argument will be conclusive against your self, unless you can shew wherein I have mistaken it.

And thus, Sir, I have given you my Thoughts of your Propositions as clearly as I could, and I hope with the Mixture of nothing offensive. I assure you, 'tis a through Conviction of Truth has caus'd me to engage in this Controversie ; 'tis Truth I pursue ; and I bless God I can and do embrace, on which ever side it appears to me to lie. And therefore know not of any one particular Denomination or Party, with which I wholly agree, which I hope may be a sufficient Evidence that I am neither led by Interest nor Prejudice ; and so may encourage you to write with the same Calmness that appears in your Letter to my self, and I think in this to you. I declare I shall be ready to acknowledge any thing I can learn from you. And as to your Request, I suppose you are before this satisfied how ready I am to second that Motion, and have accordingly given Orders to my Bookseller, as you desire.

Before I conclude, I must consider the three things you take notice of in your Postscript.

1. I had said, 'Tis certain, our Protestant Bishops at the Time of the Reformation, did look on the Offices of Bishops and Presbyters to be the same by Divine Right, as is plain from an Original of those Times; a Copy of which Bp. Burnet has given us in his History of the Reformation, who apologizes for their Notion, and calls it, to the best of my Remembrance, the Dregs of Popery. Here you say, you wish I had mention'd the Volume and Page, and that you can't but think my Memory must somewhat fail me; and that I deal somewhat too freely with such a Man of Parts as Bp. Burnet is, by representing him to apologize after so incoherent a manner. I think I can fully satisfy you in this matter if in nothing else.

Bp. Burnet then in the first Volume of that History (2d Edition) has in the latter Part of that Volume, p. 321. among the Addenda to the Collection of Records, given us that Copy which I refer to; which is thus intituled, "A Declaration made of the Functions and Divine Institution of Bishops and Priests, *An Original*. And therein we have these Words, p. 323. "Item, "That this Office, this Power and Authority was committed "and given by Christ and his Apostles to certain Persons only; "that is to say, unto Priests and Bishops, whom they did "elect, call, and admit thereunto by their Prayers and Imposition of their Hands. And p. 324. "The Truth is, that in the "New Testament there is no mention made of any Degrees or "Distinctions in Orders, but only of Deacons or Ministers, and "of Priests or Bishops. This was sign'd by seven and thirty Hands, (besides some whose Names could not be read) and of these two were Archbishops, and eleven Bishops.

In the former Part of the first Volume, where Bp. Burnet is speaking of this very Original, p. 366. he has these Words, "It having been (*N.B.*) the common Stile of the Age, to reckon "Bishops and Priests as the same Office, 'tis no wonder if at "this time, the Clergy of this Church, the greatest part of "them being still leaven'd with the old Superstition, and the "rest of them not having spare-time enough to examine lesser "Matters, retain'd still their former Phrases in this Particular. "On this I have insisted the more, that it may appear how little they have consider'd things, who are so far carried with "their Zeal against the Establish'd Government of this Church, "as to make much use of some Passages of the Schoolmen and "Canonists that deny them to be distinct Offices, for these are "the very Dregs of Popery; the one raising the Priests higher "for the Sake of Transubstantiation; the other pulling the Bishops lower for the sake of the Pope's Supremacy, and by "such Means bringing them almost to an Equality.

By this, I hope, it appears my Memory did not fail me, and that I have not dealt too freely with the first Reformers, or Bp. *Burnet*; tho' I'm far from judging Bp. *Burnet's* Apology to be a just one. For 'tis evident they build not their Notions on School-men and Canonists, but on the New Testament. And if they should be suppos'd influenc'd by the Judgments of Men, 'twere perhaps more reasonable to think they did regard the Opinion of some others, rather than that of School-men and Canonists: And especially if we consider that the Notion of some then was, as we have it in another place of the Collections in the same Vol. p. 226. set down in part by Bp. *Stillingfleet* also, *Iren.* p. 392. "The Bishops and Priests were at one time, and "were not two things, but both one Office in the beginning of "Christ's Religion. A Bishop may make a Priest, and so may "Princes and Governours also; and that by the Authority of "God committed to them and the People also, by their Election.

'Tis plain, this Opinion was of such Latitude as to answer for the Validity of the Reform'd Ordinations abroad; and if they should not be allow'd to have any regard to foreign Reformers, yet 'tis evident they regarded the Prince, rather than the Opinions of Schoolmen and Canonists.

And as for the Opinion of others, I refer you to the aforementioned Bp. *Stillingfleet's Iren.* p. 413. and to Mr. *Baxter's* Christian Concord, (there cited) and his Treatise of Episcopacy, Part the 2d, p. 114.

I may well therefore say this was their Opinion: and it concerns not me to reconcile it with what you mention from the Preface to the Publick Form of Ordination; tho' I may add in their behalf, that the State of Subscriptions has not been always the same: Sometimes they have been more press'd than at others: and several have held Preferment in the Church without subscribing at all, as *John Fox* the Martyrologist, and several who had only Presbyterian Ordination; which is a farther Demonstration of what I asserted. I don't much wonder at what you say concerning Arch-bishop *Laud*, nor do I think it worth while to contend about him: What I asserted you may see Proof of in the Authors referr'd to. I own he was what you say of Bp. *Burnet*, A MAN OF PARTS; but it shall be always my unfeigned Desire, that Men of his Disposition may be kept from the Exercise of such a Power as that, which we know he had and us'd.

2. The next thing you animadvert on, is, *My desiring my Reader to observe that which the Dissenters are well pleas'd to see, that their Cause must stand or fall, with that of all the Protestant Churches.* And here you ask me whether I have not read in

your's or others Writings, *that there is a vast difference between the Case of our Presbyterian Ordination, and that of other Protestant Churches beyond the Seas ? forasmuch as many of them alledge an utmost Necessity (not a Choice) in their taking up with Presbyterian Ordination, which we can't pretend to.*

Now tho' I knew very well, that some of your Writers do pretend this in their Behalf, yet I did then, and do still, think the Pretence has not any good Ground. For, (1.) As to your self, your Argument makes no difference between them and us; and so you can't but own, if you consider what you say with reference to your Theses in this Letter to my self, p. 10. *In short, the Theses prove, that any Ordination perform'd by a Presbyter (tho' Episcopally ordain'd himself) whenever it be perform'd, is invalid.* (2.) I would fain know what that Necessity is, which obliges them to be content without Episcopal Ordination. For what tho' they have not Bishops of their own, might they not easily have some ordain'd here by our English Bishops, if they thought Bishops so necessary ? Would our English Bishops, do we think, have refus'd them this Kindness ? Certainly they would not : And I would fain know why I must allow a greater Necessity in their Case, than was allowed by Arch Bishop *Laud*, whom you so highly value. You may see in his Life writ by Dr. *Heylin*, that when Bishop *Hall* was willing to allow, " That Presbyterian Government might be of use in some Cities or Territories, wherein Episcopal Government, through Iniquity of Times, could not be had, p. 389. Bishop *Laud* was by no means willing to grant this, and therefore in answer to it, has these Words, p. 401. " First, I pray you consider, whether this Concession be not needless here, and in it self of dangerous Consequence : Next, I conceive there is no place where Episcopacy may not be had, if there be a Church more than in Title only : And more to the same purpose may be there read. Or why should I allow such a Necessity as Bishop *Taylor* would not allow : Whose Episcopacy asserted I find thus cited, p. 191. " *M. Du Plessis*, a Man of Honour and great Learning, attests, that at the Reformation there were many Archbishops and Cardinals in *Germany, France and Italy, &c.* that join'd in the Reformation, whom they might but did not employ in their Ordinations ; and therefore what Necessity can be pretended in this Case I would fain learn, that I might make their Defence.

3. If some few have pretended Necessity, there are a vast number more that have join'd with us in asserting the Identity of a Bishop and Presbyter, and have slyly pleaded for it. To which purpose I need only refer to *the Remarks on Mr. James Lacy's Answer,*

Answer, p. 170, &c. In which Author you will find (if I mistake not) an Answer to a great part of your Testimonies.

4. I may well say of the publick Confessions of those Churches, what you say of the Preface to the Publick Form of Ordination in the Church of *England*, p. 14. of this your Letter to me, *What more authentick Testimony can be produc'd to this purpose?* And yet you may see in the same Author, p. 164. That in their Confessions they acknowledge the Identity of Bishops and Presbyters.

5. Should it be suppos'd, that theirs were a Case of Necessity, we may alledge the same. For what could they do, who were ordain'd when the Bishops were ejected? Was not theirs as much a Case of Necessity then, as that of the Protestants abroad? Or again, let the Case be put of those who have been ordain'd since 1662. If any unlawful Terms are impos'd on us, and without complying with them, the Bishops, according to the Law of the Land, will not ordain, we are not to comply with those Terms; and therefore as we are fully convinc'd this is the true State of our Case, we can't but judge *ours* is a Case of Necessity as well as *theirs*. And I believe there are very few of us who would have refus'd an Ordination merely because Episcopal. I can speak this for myself, tho' I judge Presbyterian Ordination as valid as Episcopal, to all intents and purposes, besides that of Preferment by the Laws of the Land, yet Prudence would have led me to have chosen Episcopal Ordination rather, had there not been such Terms impos'd as I could not be satisfy'd to comply with. And since we can't have it with safe Consciences, and are satisfy'd that 'tis not necessary, we are easy, as the Protestants abroad are, without it. And for these Reasons I still insist on what I said; and am so far from esteeming it (as you call it) *a Flam*, that I look on the considerable Difference you pretend, to be really nothing else.

The Third Particular you mention, is, that I say, *your pretending to come to Scripture is but a blind, for you drop it before you come to the End of your Argument.*

The Case is plainly this, You pretend to prove by Scripture, that Presbyterian Ordination is not valid: And here, if I understand Your Argument, it runs thus:

Ordination, perform'd by Persons not themselves invested with the Power of Ordination, is not valid.

Ordination by Presbyters is perform'd by Persons not invested with the Power of Ordination.

Therefore Ordination by Presbyters is not valid.

Now here is, of the two Premises, one that is not matter of dispute; and that is, that Ordination perform'd by Persons who

who are not themselves invested with the Power of Ordination, is not valid, and so this needed not to be prov'd at all; and yet this is the only thing attempted to be prov'd by Scripture. But the other of the Premises, which is the main Matter of the Controversy, and on the Truth of which your Conclusion as much depends as on the Truth of the other, is not once attempted to be prov'd by Scripture: And for this Reason I said, you drop'd the Scripture before you got to the End of your Argument.

I think all will grant, that a Man who pretends to prove any thing by Scripture, must from thence be able to prove whatever he advances in order to the Proof of it; and consequently you could not justly pretend to have given a Scripture Proof of your Conclusion, unless you had prov'd both those Premises on which it was grounded; and especially unless you had prov'd by the Scripture the main Proposition denied by your Adversaries. So that if what I said be not true, I can't see how you can escape the Charge of another Fault in arguing; and that is, the begging the Thing in question; I mean, while you advance not any of that Proof you propos'd, but take that for granted which is the Point in debate; as this is really it, *Whether Presbyters have the Power of Ordination or no*; Or else your Argument is one and the same when you argue from Scripture, and when you do not; which I had taken notice of, and sounds, I confess, a little odd. And thus I have review'd your Postscript.

And now I shall only add, that I heartily concur with you in your Prayers to God, that he of his infinite Mercy would bless and direct us both in a sincere and impartial Enquiry after Truth, and in your Desires of the Prayers of all good Christians to the same End.

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I am,

Reverend Sir,

Your most Affectionate,

And Faithful Servant in Christ,

Newberry, December
the 13th, 1706.

James Peirce.

F I N I S.

A
Continuation
OF THE
DEFENCE
OF THE
REMARKS
ON
Dr. *WELLS's*
LETTERS.

In a Fifth and Sixth Letter to the Doctor.

The Second Edition.

By *JAMES PEIRCE.*

L O N D O N,

Printed by *J. Humfreys*, for *John Lawrence*,
at the Angel in the *Poultry*. 1707.



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A Fifth Letter Address'd to Dr. Wells, in Answer to his Two Letters, in reference to the Remarks on his Letter to a Dissenting Parishioner.

S I R,

I Have perus'd your Letter to my self, and that at the End to a Dissenting Parishioner, in reference to the Remarks in my Second Letter; and do now return you my Thoughts concerning them: I should have done it immediately, if I had thought your Letters had contain'd any thing material in the Controversy, or difficult for a common Reader to see through; but finding it otherwise, I thought 'twould be time enough to answer these, when you gave me occasion for another Answer. I suppose you will not be angry, that I judge your unprov'd Assertions of *my false Arguing, false Interpretation, false Doctrine, and other disingenuous and foul Dealing*, to be only Words us'd to amuse your Reader, and to be a Trick and Sham, which you think will be of Service in a Dispute. When you shall have swell'd your Answer to a considerable Bulk, if 'tis all like this short Specimen you have given us of it, I shall esteem it as demonstrative an Evidence and Proof of a compleat and total Victory, as a Disputant can desire. What you have said hitherto is so very trifling, that a little more of the same nature, will make me despise disputing with you; which I mention, that I may engage you to write with more Strength and Evidence; and then the confident Boastings and Triumphs, which appear now with so ill a Grace in your Writings, will better become them. I took your own Method, and answer'd you in the Order you had set things, and yet you are for a new one: I could perhaps guess the Reason, if I were as free on that Head as you are: But, Sir, you shall take what Method you please; and, provided you will but talk to the Purpose, I shall be ready to attend you.

You boast in your Theses concerning the Invalidity of Presbyterian Ordination, which, you see, I am ready to discuss, and have given you my Reasons why I think otherwise of them than you do.

And I shall be as ready as you to debate the second Question you propose, whether you or we are guilty of Schism? And I hope my Aims and Endeavours in clearing this Matter, are as laudable as yours. I shall now consider what you say in

this Letter to me concerning some Scraps you have pick'd out of my two first Letters.

You say, *Whereas I set you forth in several places, and particularly the first and last Paragraphs of my second Letter, as a most uncharitable Fellow* (but Fellow is not my Word, 'tis your own, tho' the Reader might suspect it to be mine, as 'tis printed :) *on account of the damning Sentences which you pass on me and my Party : Could you but prevail with me to use Moderation, and with Coolness of Temper to consider of the Matter, you perswade your self that I should quickly perceive that I speak very improperly, not to say falsely, when I affirm you pass damning Sentences upon us.* Well, Sir, you have easily gain'd this Point, and have prevail'd with me to use Moderation, and Coolness of Temper; but yet I can't perceive any thing of what you say, because I can't, however moderate I am, put out my own Eyes, or contradict the plain Testimonies they give me in this Case. But you go on thus ; *You can't but your self own (Letter ist, p. 60.) that any Sin, and consequently Schism, is of it self of a destructive damning Nature : And this, I suppose, you own, (as well as I) because the Scripture plainly declares so much : Whence it follows, that either you, as well as I, pass damning Sentences on Schismatics ; or else, that 'tis neither you nor I, but in reality the Scripture, that passes damning Sentences against Schismatics ; and what either you or I do, when we say that Schismatics are in a State of Damnation, can possibly amount to no more, than a Declaration of the damning Sentences passed by the Scripture on Schismatics.*

Can any thing be more trifling and incoherent than this ? Certainly if you had both a good Cause, and Ability to manage it, you would not talk after this loose rate. I own, *that any Sin, and so Schism, is of a destructive damning Nature in it self ; that is, that it deserves Damnation, and without pardoning Grace, would infer it.* But may I therefore say, because there is no Man free from Sin, that all Men are in a State of Damnation ? When we talk of Mens being in a State of Damnation, we mean somewhat more than their doing that which in its own Nature deserves Damnation, viz. their being such, who have no Right by the Covenant of Grace to Pardon and Salvation. But this Right a Man may have, notwithstanding several Sins, which in their own Nature are destructive : So that the Question here really comes to this ; Whether, according to the Gospel, it be certain, that a Man who believes in Christ, and sincerely performs his whole Duty to God, as far as he knows it, using too all means for the Knowledge of it, and yet, through Mistake in disputable Matters, not essential to Religion, is guilty of Schism, is thereby excluded from all Benefits by the Covenant

venant of Grace, and so in such a Condition, that if he dies in it, he shall be certainly damn'd? This, I say, is false; and therefore, tho' I own'd Schism in its own nature damning, I deny'd that all Schismatics are in a State of Damnation; and particularly express'd my Charity toward your Party, whom I judge to be guilty of that Sin. You add; *This being so, it will follow (supposing I should be mistaken in the Application, yet) the utmost I can be guilty of, in applying to the Dissenters the damning Sentences pass'd by the Scripture on Schismatics, is only a bare Error of Judgment; and there is not the least Ground for accusing me of Uncharitableness.*

But, with your good leave, Sir, do not the Protestants on good Ground accuse the Papists of *Uncharitableness*, for damning all out of their own Church, and yet notwithstanding this is an Error in their Judgments? And indeed your very Judgment (as well as theirs) is uncharitable; and that renders your Uncharitableness the more inveterate and deadly: And your very Judgment, as I have observ'd in my second Letter, p. 32. is most injurious to those Notions we are to form of God, and his Goodness, from his Word. We don't accuse you as uncharitable, because you endeavour to convince Persons of what you judge to be a Mistake, but because you so rashly condemn your Neighbours, when they do not, by their Infidelity or Disobedience to the Laws of Christ, give you any Ground for it: And therefore I shall here use the Words of Arch-Bishop Tillotson, in his Sermon on 1 Cor. 3. 15. "I grant that no Charity teaches Men to see others damn'd, and not to tell them the Danger of their Condition; But 'tis to be consider'd, that damning of Men is a very hard thing, and therefore whenever we do it, the Case must be wonderfully plain.

And therefore afterwards he says thus; "And I do assure you, I had much rather persuade any one to be a good Man, than to be of any Party or Denomination of Christians whatsoever. For I doubt not but the Belief of the ancient Creed, provided we entertain nothing that is destructive of it, together with a good Life, will certainly save a Man.

After I had allow'd that Schism is in it self of a destructive damning Nature, I added, *Yet we take not upon us to judge the Conformists Eternal State, as they, many of them, do very freely ours. We know they have a merciful God to deal with, who knows how to make Allowances for the Prejudices of Education, or the Byass, that the Vogue of the World, or Interest, do in some measure give to Men that are yet truly sincere and upright.* Upon this, tho' it be not in the Letter you pretend to animadvert on, you waste no less than three Pages; which, together with the perfect

fect Innocence, Charity and Truth of the Passage, will, I doubt not, convince unprejudic'd Persons, that you wanted Matter for this Letter, and were more concern'd to say somewhat, than you were what it should prove.

I profess, I am still of the Opinion, that this is far from being *Latitudinarian Divinity with a Witness*, as you term it. You are, I think, the first, and in likelihood will be the last Man that ever denied it : And herein I suppose you would not have been singular, had you not been tempted to it by a Desire of reviling me, and by a want of some better Materials for a Dispute ; which perhaps will seem strange to a Man that reads my second Letter.

You think 'tis not consistent with Sincerity or Uprightness, for a Person to be in any measure byass'd by Interest. I never asserted that Uprightness was consistent with an obstinate, deliberate preferring of any selfish Interest to a Man's Duty to God ; or that a Man could be justly said to be an upright Man, who allow'd himself in known Sin, to promote his Interest. Your Conscience has Latitude enough, to allow you to strain my Words to such a Sense, as no one besides your self can think they will bear ; and I suppose you thought it would be for your Interest to do so, and therefore, I fear, must be here self-condemn'd.

I suppos'd the Matter under Consideration to be disputable, and that there may be some plausible Reasons alledg'd on the wrong side, but that with all temporal Interest was apparently for it ; and I said, I thought *Interest* might, in this Case, give a Byass, in some measure, to Men who were yet truly sincere and upright ; that is, not through their Wilfulness, while they resolve to pursue their Interest, right or wrong, or tho they are convinc'd that their Interest and Duty will not consist, but through meer Inadvertency. They are willing to have their Interest and Duty conjoyn'd, and to be convinc'd they are so ; and therefore are more easily prevail'd on, and satisfy'd by some plausible Arguments to believe they are. I own they ought to watch against this, and to repent of it, when they discover that Interest has thus byass'd them : But I doubt not at all that this may often happen, as many other Failings of a good Man's Life, through Inadvertency or Surprise, and may therefore slip his Notice, and never be repented of particularly, but only in the general : And in that Case, I make no doubt, where the Tenour of a Man's Life is consonant to the Divine Law, that such Failings and Infirmities are forgiven him. And I am very much inclin'd to that *Latitudinarian Divinity* (if it must be so nam'd) that judges of Mens Integrity not by a single Act, which may not it self be upright, but by the prevailing Bent
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of a Man's Heart, and the main Course of his Life. I will ask you, Whether you do not think *St. Peter* was a sincere and upright Man? And yet was somewhat mov'd by Vogue and Interest (that is, some kind of sinful Selfishness) when he, with several more, acted in that manner, mention'd, *Gal. 2. 11, 12, 13, 14.* when *St. Paul* says expressly, they walked not uprightly? Or I might ask, Whether you do not believe that the two Sons of *Zebedee* were sincere and upright Men, and yet were byass'd by Interest in their Petition to our Lord, to sit the one on his Right Hand, and the other on his Left, in his Kingdom? I might ask you, Whether you do not think a sinful Interest, in some or other of the Branches of it, is not the main Temptation that occasions the Sins and Failings of sincere and upright Men? I am inclin'd to think this is one way or other at the Bottom of most Sins: And therefore since I judge the Sincere and Upright do daily sin, I think it not unreasonable to suppose this in some measure to byass them. Again, do you believe, Sir, that there is no sincere and upright Man that ever sins, in not being as charitable as he ought to the Poor? Or do you think, that if such an one may possibly sin in this Respect, he is not therein, in the least measure, byass'd by Interest? Or do you think that every sincere Man, in a Way of Trade, does not in the least measure exceed due Bounds in seeking the World? Or that if he does, he is not byass'd by Interest to do so? Or will you say, that all those famous Writers of your own Church were not in the least measure byass'd by Interest, who wrote with so much Heat and Earnestness for Passive Obedience? Or those who have since renounc'd that Doctrine? Or will you say, that all those who were in the least measure byass'd by Interest, were not sincere and upright? Do you think the Nonjurors are the only sincere and upright Men in the Nation? Or do you think that all those who declar'd that it is not lawful, on any Pretence whatever, to take up Arms against the King, had not their Judgments in the least measure byass'd by Interest, when they judg'd that Declaration to contain only a Truth? In fine, Sir, I ask you, Whether you are willing to have your Sincerity and Uprightness try'd by your own Rule at the great Day? Are you willing that God should condemn you for ever as insincere and hypocritical, if you can then be found to have ever been (suppose in the last 20 or 30 Years past of your Life) **IN THE LEAST MEASURE** byass'd by Interest, of which you have not particularly repented? Dare you say this? For my own Part I dare not for ten Thousand Worlds; but desire to rely on the Mercy of God for the Forgiveness of those manifold Failings I may have been guilty of in this kind, which I observ'd not at
their

their particular times, and have not therefore been able to repent of particularly since. Nor are my Notions peculiar in this respect: Do not your own chief Writers allow as much? I have had the Curiosity on this Occasion to consult some eminent Writers of your own; such as Arch-Bishop Tillotson, Dr. Sherlock, Dr. Barrow, and Dr. Lucas; and shall be ready to produce their Testimonies if you call for them: And the only Reason why I do it not now, is, because they would swell my Answer too much; and the Case is so plain as to render it needless. I shall therefore content my self with the Testimony of Dr. Hammond, Practical Catechism, *Lib. 2. Sect. 1.* Where he has these Words; "But the Truth is, as long as we live here, and carry this Flesh about us, somewhat of Carnality there will remain to be daily purg'd out, and so also some Doubtings, some Reliques of Hypocrisy, somewhat of my self, my own Credit, *my own Interest*, still *secretly interposing* in my Godliest Actions. But these (so they be not suffer'd to reign, to be the chief Masters in me, to carry the main of my Actions after them) may be reconcileable with a good Estate; as humane Frailties, not wasting Sins. Nay, I do not easily believe your own Divinity will disallow of this, nor can I think so meanly of your Understanding, as to question whether you did not perceive my Meaning. And, Sir, if you have endeavour'd herein wilfully to traduce me, think not that God will pardon this Injury without a particular Repentance; and a Satisfaction as publick as the Injury it self.

You argue against me from the Common People, who when they would prove a Man sincere, alledge this, *that he will not, in any measure, be byass'd by Interest*; but truly I judge their Expression is Hyperbolical, unless they mean thus, that he will not knowingly and wilfully be so byass'd. And I very much question whether any single Virtue (and particularly a Contempt of the World) be ever perfect in any Man in this Life: And yet your Hypothesis is built on that Opinion.

You say, *Our Saviour plainly affirms, Mat. 6. 24. Ye can't serve God and Mammon; but you, Sir, on the contrary, teach in effect, ye can serve God and Mammon: For to be byass'd by Interest, so far as to be kept from discovering and practising one's Duty to God, is no other than to serve Mammon.* But do not all allow, that a Man is to be denominated not from single Acts and unobserv'd Frailties, but from the general and main Bent of his Life and Actions? Has not every true Servant of God Work and Business to do in this Matter, to mortify those worldly Affections that still remain *in some measure* in him, tho the full Power and Dominion of them be broken? Let Dr. Hammond be

be here consulted, who knowing the Truth of what I asserted, and which I have set down from him, thus paraphrases that Text, *Mat. 6. 24.* "Even so the tending and observing of Wealth, doing nothing but may in the Eye of the World tend to the Increase of Riches, is not reconcileable with the serving of God, doing what Christ requires of us.

And he that will consult the *Synopsis Criticorum*, will find others, and particularly *Grotius*, thus to expound the Text; and I perswade my self you are the first Man in the World who ever interpreted that Text, so as to exclude from being the Servants of God, those who had any sinful Regard to the World; and by the same kind of Reasoning, you might prove from *Rom. 6. 16.* that no Sin is consistent with a Man's being a Servant of Righteousness; and shew your Unmercifulness to all Mankind. And now I need not consider distinctly the wild Suppositions you put, which no more concern me than the Man in the Moon.

But only as you are pleas'd before you leave this, and several times afterward, to reflect on me and my Party, as byas'd by Interest, I beseech you next time to let me know what Interest the Generality of Dissenters can be suppos'd byas'd by; who by their Dissent put themselves, as you know, to a Charge in several Respects, which they would be otherwise free from. Or what Interest is it that byasses me? I declare plainly, Interest does so far byass me, that I am very willing to be convinc'd of the Lawfulness of Conformity, tho I hope it neither does nor shall byass me to do any thing wilfully against the Conviction of my Mind; and I will endeavour that it shall not hinder the Impartiality of my Judgment. I beg Pardon of my Reader for detaining him thus long in so plain a Case. I can as easily pass over an impertinent Ramble as another, but when 'tis set out with a grave and solemn Air, and attended with the Charge of false Doctrine, 'tis really provoking, and will apologize for a longer Answer. And as to you, Sir, I shall only pity you, and pray God throughly to convince, and graciously pardon you.

In the next place you take notice of what I say, *That the Dissenters are not able on their side to end the Division.* You say, *You would fain know for what Reason.* And that you may easily know from my Letters, wherein I have spoken plainly enough; and therefore can't but wonder at such Discourse as this from you. You say, *There are no hard or sinful Terms impos'd on us;* that is, I suppose, none that you think so; but, you know, we think otherwise, on such Reasons as you have not, as yet, thought fit to answer. And therefore the rest of your Paragraph is useless.

You put it to me, *Whether the old Puritans, or Nonconformists, were not as truly zealous against Popery as we can be.* Well, let

it be so; and neither of us can be charg'd with want of Zeal against Popery. You say, *Albeit they did dislike many things as we do, yet they judg'd it their bounden Duty not to begin a Division from the Church, because they plainly foresaw it would give Advantages to Popery.* And you think this Difference between them and us is owing to this, that they were sincere and upright, and we are not. But nothing can be more unreasonable than this Discourse: For, (1.) The very Terms of Conformity were purposely made harder in 1662. than they were to the old Puritans. (2.) Since you own they were sincere and upright, and yet scrupled several things, you must own that there are hard and difficult Terms impos'd on us, even such as upright Men may judge so. (3.) The fruitless Endeavours of the old Puritans, to gain a Reformation while they continued in the Church, is a Vindication of us in leaving it. I think 'tis one thing that those of your own side do generally advance, that Men who are dissatisfy'd in a Church, should not rashly make a Separation, but should first try all humble and proper Methods to prevail on Church-Rulers, to mend the things that need Reformation. This was long done by our Predecessors, but nothing could be gain'd; but on the contrary, the Case is become worse than it was before; and therefore we think that our Conduct is most just and reasonable. (4.) The Non-conformists of old, tho they often suffer'd in one Place, they were yet capable of being useful in another, in the Church of England, whereas all that are of their Principles, are now by the *Bartholomew-Act* render'd utterly incapable of any Service in the Church. And in Truth the Conduct of the old Puritans and the present Dissenters, is not different as to the main: They were willing to keep in the Church as long as they could; and we, notwithstanding our being violently and unjustly thrust out by our Brethren, are willing again to return to them, and have all along shown it, tho they will not suffer us. And methinks, when we are forcibly thrust out, and the Door is shut with a Design to keep us out, 'tis not like sincere Dealing to rail at us for not coming in. Besides, the Advantage the Papists gain by our Divisions is not directly from us, nor is it amongst us. We do not in the least flinch toward Popery, nor have they been able to gain Profelytes among us; but they practis'd on the same sort of Men for gaining Profelytes, as they had before for making a Division. We are not, for our Division, one whit the more inclin'd to their Doctrines, or backward to yield the most hearty Assistance against their Cause. The Advantages then that the Papists gain by our Divisions are such as these; That they have a plausible Pretence to use with People, to recom-

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mend the Authority and Power which they pretend to over Men Consciences, as they do from the Differences among Protestants in general : Or they can the more easily work on our bitterest Adversaries, who from a Spirit of Opposition are willing to depart as far as they can from us, tho at the same time they make Advances toward them : Or else having made a Division among us, they have stir'd up our Brethren to plunder and undo us, that so the Hands of such as were as zealous (at least) as any against them, might in a great measure be disabled ; and then they think when they have made use of one part to crush the other, they can the more easily seize on the other themselves : And hereby too they think they can vindicate their own barbarous Persecutions for Conscience sake. And is it not plain to you, the Dissenters have good Reason to be sorry for their having such Advantages as these by our Divisions ? Is it not plain they had all the Reason, as well as Interest therefore to end the Division, and would have done it long ago, and so have prevented their Sufferings, if they could ?

You represented the Dissenters as *agreeing with the Papists, in drawing off People from the Communion of the Church of England.* And I told you the Church-men agree with the Papists in drawing People from the Dissenters, and gave you several Instances of your own Agreement with them, much more to the Purpose than what you can alledge concerning us. But you say, *We agree with them in their common Design, of weakening the Church of England, the main Bulwark of the Reform'd Religion against Popery.* And we say you joyn'd with them, in endeavouring utterly to ruin the Dissenters, who were as hearty Enemies to Popery as the Church of England. But I do most humbly beseech you, notwithstanding *the Profoundness* of your *Intellectuals*, so far to condescend to *the Shallowness* of mine, as to help me to a true Notion of the Church of England, as 'tis confessedly the Bulwark of the Reform'd Religion. I fear when this comes to be clear'd, your new Gloss on your Words will appear to be only, according to your Dialect, *a Flam, or a Quibble.* Is it the Doctrine, the Ceremonies, the Liturgy, or the Threefold Order of the Church of England, that is this Bulwark of the Reformed Religion against Popery ? The Church of England, according to some Mens Dialect, is one of the most amphibious Creatures in the World. When any Good is done, then the Church becomes the State, and claims the Honour of having done it : If any Evil is done, then truly the Church of England is distinguish'd from the State ; and so our Rulers and Governours may share the Disgrace among them. To speak then properly, England is, under God, the Bulwark of the Reform'd

Religion; as it is the most potent of any of the Reform'd Countries, and does contribute such great Assistance to the Protestant Cause.

Now how do the Dissenters weaken this Bulwark? Does any Man by becoming a Dissenter grow less opposite and zealous against Popery, or less ready to joyn his helping Hand with the Nation against it? Has it not been publicly own'd, that the Dissenters readily concur'd with the Church of *England* in the late Revolution, to defeat the Designs of a Popish King? Are they not as zealous and hearty as any for the Prosecution of the present War against *France*? Are not our Governours fully satisfy'd in this Matter? And if *England* be considered as the Bulwark of the Reform'd Religion, 'tis not at all weaken'd in that respect by the Number of Dissenters. Nay, should all the Nation fall in with us in our Principles, this Bulwark would not be in the least the weaker, but rather the stronger. The only Men that I know of, whose Conduct weakens this Bulwark, are they who joyn'd with two Popish Princes in their Counsels, and in laying all the Hardships they could, on one Part of the Strength of this Nation, who were for imprisoning and plundering Men, (because they did their Duty, and worship'd God according to the best Light of their own Minds) and all that they might become incapable of opposing Popery: And next to these are they, who, inheriting the same Principles, have been of late attempting to revive their old Practices. Blessed be God who has not given us a Prey to their Teeth.

You ask if what I say be true, *That all Parties think themselves in the right, and love to have others of their Mind, why we don't think fit to bestow some Pains, in drawing the Quakers to our selves, since we differ more from them than you?* Now according to the Observation I have been hitherto able to make, I could never see but that the Dissenters are willing to draw from both sides. I don't perceive that they make it their Business to perswade Church-men, unless they themselves give them Opportunity; and the same they are ready to do to any others. And for my own Part, as I own the Difference vastly greater between us and Quakers, or Papists, than between us and you, so I should much rather convince one Quaker or Papist of the Goodness of our Cause, than ten sober and vertuous Church-men; and that because I think the Interest of the main things in Religion are vastly preferable to that of a Party. Perhaps you could not so well acquit your self, if I should put it to you to give me a Reason, why if the Pretence of the Evil of Schism be the Reason of your Heat, you, and Men of your Principles, are not more zealous to convince the Non-Jurors of their Guilt in that respect.

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As to what you say of your Postscript, and your further Design, I am very easie ; I shew'd you, it was not difficult to run the Parallel between you and the Papists much further. You may use your Liberty as you please: Such Methods will not hurt us ; for tho it would grieve one to see the Workings of so much Spite and Malice, yet the Management thereof, is such as only deserves Pity and Contempt.

You say, *You have observ'd in your Testimonies, p. 43. what vast Ground Popery got during the low Estate of the Church of England, and the Usurpation of Fanaticism, especially of my darling Favourite, Independency.* But you are the most unhappy Man in your Guesse of any I have met with. I have no such darling Favourite as you imagine: What I perceive to be a Truth I embrace, whether held by Independents or Episcoparians ; and all that know me, know I have a Latitude in all those Matters.

Well, I have look'd into the Place in your Testimonies, and find very little to your purpose. You say, *they join'd with the Fanaticks* (the civil Title your polite Education teaches you to give us) *in carrying on an open Rebellion against King Charles I.* Very well ; and is it any Wonder to see them fishing in troubled Waters, or endeavouring to embroil a Nation ? And did they not join with the Church of *England* afterwards in opposing the Dissenters ? *Robert Mentit de Salmonel's* Account may be true for ought I know ; but I am not much inclin'd to believe it on his Word. And what if there were Papists that serv'd the Parliament against the King, were there not likewise that serv'd on the other side ? And what if Mr. *Edwards* says the Papists did generally shelter themselves under the Vizor of Independency : Are they not ready to do the like under any Vizor ? Or have they not appear'd without any Vizor at all, since the Church of *England* recover'd her self out of her low Estate ? What tho Dr. *Bailly* courted *Oliver* with gross Flattery, were not others of the Church of *England* courted by the Papists in like manner ? Why else was a Cardinal's Hat offer'd to an Arch Bishop ? Or why did the Benedictine Monk *Menardus* so highly flatter Arch Bishop *Laud*, as it appears he did by the Arch Bishop's Answer to him, publish'd by *Le Clerc*, in the Beginning of his Edition of the Fathers which liv'd in the Apostles Times ? Or why did the Papists boast so much in that A. Bp's Time, of the Steps made towards them ? Why did the Jesuit (Dr. *Heylin* mentions in A. Bp. *Laud's* Life, p. 416.) boast, " That the Articles of the Church of *England* seem patient, or ambitious rather of some Sense, wherein they may seem Catholick ? Why was it pretended by their Party, " That the Universities, Bishops and Divines of this Realm, " did

“ did daily embrace Catholick Opinions, tho they profess’d not
 “ so much with Mouth or Pen, *for fear of the Puritans?* Ibid.
 And a great deal more may be seen to the same purpose in that
 part of the Doctor’s History. In fine, You give us a mighty
 Evidence of the vast Ground Popery got in that time, viz. no
 less than *One Hundred and Fifty Persons* are mention’d, as re-
 concil’d to *Rome* in the Year 1652. This might be a great
 thing then; but I fear it has been so vastly out-done for several
 Years together, since the Church of *England* got out of its low
 Estate, and this Bulwark was up, that it hardly deserves to be re-
 member’d, much less that such Use as this should be made of it.

You say, There is a *Popish Design at the Bottom of the Noise and
 Clamour which has been lately made about High and Low Church-men.*
 And indeed I fear this Noise and Clamour is too truly bottom’d
 on some Popish Design; not of theirs, on whom you would
 charge it, but of quite another sort of Men. Good Sir, do you
 not think the Papists have some Design working, according to
 the Restlessness of their Humour? They use not to work alone;
 who are they then that join with them? Are they not the Ja-
 cobites, and those call’d High Church-men? Alas, what has
 been so publickly observ’d, and so openly spoken of, can’t be
 conceal’d; and therefore I can’t but with you think, there is
 indeed some Popish Design at the Bottom of the Difference,
 which one part of the Church of *England* has made by their vio-
 lent Counsels, the Success of which would have been no small
 Joy to their good Friends of *St. Germain’s*, and their Abettors. I
 value not the Names themselves: Call them what you please.

Is there not manifestly a Foundation for a Distinction among
 yourselves? If not, whence are the mighty Struggles at E-
 lections? Has not the Distinction been coin’d among yourselves?
 And have you not wrote against one another under those Names?
 And therefore if there be really no Foundation for Distinction
 among you, you are much to be admir’d, I confess, that you
 are so earnestly contending about a little *Goats Wooll*. Whe-
 ther your Account of your self, and your apparent Conduct do
 agree, I leave to the Reader to judge from your Writings. I
 never took you for a Pluralist, as you tax me; nor is there any
 thing in my Words that gives any Intimation of it.

I had said (*L. 2. p. 48.*) *’Tis plain who are now most serviceable
 to the Popish Cause, even those who are united in Counsels with
 them, as the Jacobites and High Church-men actually are; and that
 in opposition to the Dissenters and Moderate Church-men. And
 there is evidently more Danger from the Opposition of the High Church,
 against the Moderate Church-men, than from any Disagreement be-
 tween them and the Dissenters. And ’tis the Union of these two*
that

that has kept out Popery, which had otherwise overflowed the Nation.

With Reference to this Distinction, you say, *it was brought up by the Enemies of the Church.* Supposing it were, you are serv'd then only in your own kind, who so freely use the most abusive Expressions of the Dissenters. But there is no manner of Ground for you to alledge this. You say indeed, *There is no solid Reason for the Distinction, but it carries in it self downright Nonsense.* But if there be a Difference between you, and the Church of England is really divided into two different Parties, contending and quarrelling with one another, and pursuing opposite Interests every where, this must be a *solid Reason for a Distinction*; and he must be blind indeed that can't see this to be the Case at this Day. Now how would you have a Man distinguish these two Parties? I call'd them by such Names as they are generally call'd by, and as many on both sides own; and I think that was the way to be understood. But where is the downright Nonsense? Are you all agreed about the Things in Controversy? Are not some much higher in their Notions about the Things controverted, looking on them as essential, and fundamental; and others thinking them only tolerable, and wishing them laid aside? Has there not been all along two such Parties in the Church? Again, are not some high in their Notions about Persecution, and the forcible Methods of pressing those things on the Dissenters; while others are for our full Liberty? Are not some high-flown in passing damning Sentences on us, while others charitably love us as Christians and Brethren? Again, Do not many plead against any Alterations, as tho there were no good and just Occasion for them; while others plead for Alteration, and say there is a good and just Occasion? You may shuffle, if you will, and dissemble this, but all Men know it to be true, that it is thus among all Sorts and Ranks of you. Do not you your self distinguish Bishops in, and Bishops of the Church? Do you not cut off a great many Church-men, by denying them to be true Church-men, or true Members of the Church of *England*? You really in effect grant the Distinction, but only according to the Mode of High-Church, and a pretty Jingle, Low-Church is No-Church. This, Sir, I hope, will help you to understand my Meaning, which was sufficiently plain. It concerns not me to determine which Side acts most fairly; what I observ'd is a known Truth, That these High Church-men do actually join with the Jacobites and Papists. And as they were such kind of Men that loaded us at first with Hardships, and made the Division, and have kept it up, so it has been the Party which oppos'd them; viz. The Moderate or Low Church-men, who have prevented the Effect and Accomplishment of their Designs.

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You next consider what things are fundamental and necessary, and so not to be alter'd on any Occasion, p. 16. And here the first thing is the *Threefold Order of Ministry*. But here the Question is, Whether you may not keep your Fundamental, and yet indulge others a Liberty of not looking on it as a Fundamental? Whether if this be a Truth, it is such an one that it is absolutely necessary every Minister should believe it. You say, *No one can be esteem'd a true Member of the Church of England, that is not sincerely ready to part with his Life, rather than the said Apostolical Constitution.* But why then do you urge the Dissenters, who would not part with their Lives, you may be sure, at such a rate, to become Members of the Church of England? If they follow'd the Example you mention'd of the old Puritans, and conform'd, they would not be look'd on as true Members of the Church of England; and therefore, in my mind, they had better be in such a Church, of which they may be look'd on as the true Members.

Next you add, *As for Liturgies, and Forms of Prayer, tho they are not absolutely necessary in themselves* (which I am glad to hear of, for Rashness in Prayer may then be prevented without them) yet, "It becomes necessary (to use Mr. Calvin's words) that the publick Prayers should be stat'd or fix'd, from which it may not be lawful for any Minister to vary, in the Exercise of his Function, as well in consideration of the Weakness and Ignorance of some, as that it may appear how all Churches agree among themselves, and withall that there may be a stop put to the giddy Lightness of some who affect Novelty. And because you think these three Reasons will be always of Force, it will be necessary always to retain your excellent Liturgy, tho you should charitably condescend to the Alteration of some Expressions in it. In your Testimonies, p. 4. you cite part of this Testimony; and there you make Calvin not to say, **IT IS NECESSARY**, as you do here, but only that **HE HIGHLY APPROV'D**, which is most agreeable to his words, *valde probō*. But if you allow of Mr. Calvin's Argument, you must wholly exclude conceiv'd Prayer, which I think you ought not to do, because of what I have alledg'd to shew the Necessity thereof, where Forms are us'd: And besides you condemn your own Church, which allows Ministers to use conceiv'd Prayer before their Sermons, as I observ'd, p. 15. of my 1st Letter. But let us consider the particular Reasons themselves: His first Reason is, *the Consideration of the Weakness and Ignorance of some.* And 'tis very possible that others, if they had liv'd in his time, would have thought this Consideration of great moment in the behalf of Forms. When the Alteration was made in our Churches,

Churches, it can't be wonder'd at, that there were many weak and ignorant Persons, who kept in their Livings ; and if they had not, all their Vacancies could not presently have been fill'd up with better : So that if there had not been some such Provision as this, there must have been no Prayers at all in some Parishes, and Mr. Calvin complains of the Scarcity of able Ministers at that time, in that very Epistle. And if that was a Reason then, sure you will not say that this is the Case of the Church of *England* now, that she is not able to supply all her Parishes with such as are not weak and ignorant ; and therefore as this is only a Reason why weak Persons should use Forms, so 'tis to be hoped Care may be taken to keep such out.

His second Reason is, *That it may certainly appear how all the Churches agree among themselves.* For my Part, tho I highly value Mr. Calvin's Memory, yet I can't say, that I think this Argument conclusive : For I think it may certainly appear, that Churches do agree as far as is necessary without such Forms. And why an Account of the ordinary Matter of the several Churches Prayers, tho there be no Forms used, is not sufficient to answer that end, I do not as yet understand.

Mr. Calvin's last Reason is, *That there may be a stop put to the giddy Lightness of some who affect Novelties.* But 'tis very strange if Care may not be taken to prevent this without Forms : For my part, I profess, I'm as much an Enemy to the mixing any novel Fancies with publick Devotions, as the most zealous Advocates for Forms can be ; and if Men are not capable of discharging that Duty (or willing to do it) without affecting such Novelties, I think they are very unfit to be admitted to the sacred Office.

You say, *No true Church-man can come so low as to part with the Liturgy.* But I believe I do not mistake the Minds of some Church-men, who use it as impos'd, and judging it tolerable ; and who would not, if left to themselves, prefer the use of it. But what kind of Church-men do you urge us to be, when you perswade us to come into the Church, notwithstanding our Dislike of some things ? True Church-men you would not allow us to be, supposing we come not up to your Esteem of the Liturgy ; and therefore I think you had better be easy, to let us continue true Dissenters.

You say, *That all other Rites and Ceremonies us'd in your Church, and scrupled at by the Dissenters (as the Cross in Baptism, God-fathers, and God-mothers, Kneeling at the Sacrament, Surplice, &c.) are so far not fundamental or necessary, as to admit of Alteration on weighty and just Occasions : And therefore you cannot but think that every true Church-man is charitably dispos'd, to condescend*

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to such Alterations as shall be requisite on weighty and just Occasions.

I should be heartily glad to see some Evidence of this Charity in all true Church-men. But 'tis sufficiently plain, this Concession signifies just nothing : For as you have hitherto, so for ought I can find (and especially if I may judge by your self) you are resolv'd to deny that any such weighty and just Occasion has, or will ever come : So that this is very little to the Satisfaction of the Dissenters.

You next proceed to enquire, *What is or is not a just Occasion for such Alterations ?* Give me leave (before I proceed to consider what you say particularly on this Head) to take Notice to you what I look on as a just Occasion for making Alterations. (1.) If there be any things confessedly amiss in any Church, there is just Occasion for Alterations, by mending those things which are amiss. And that there are some things amiss in your Church, I think will not be deny'd. Your Lay-Chancellors, want of Discipline with reference to scandalous Persons, (whether Clergy or Laity) do certainly call for Reformation : Why do you not therefore set about making Alterations in these ? For my part, I really judge you can't in any Method better serve your own Cause ; and I profess, tho you should hereby lessen the Number of Dissenters, and should not widen your Door so far as to satisfy me to come in, I should yet heartily rejoice, from the great Love I have to Reformation. (2.) Suppose the things impos'd as indifferent, are by a great Number of Christians judg'd sinful, and from the Imposition does arise (as there then necessarily must) Discord and Strife ; there is then Reason for altering the Imposition : For tho the things should really prove lawful, yet the Imposers can't themselves be free from Blame, inasmuch as they do by this means lay a Snare for them, and without any Necessity give Occasion for that Strife. And this is the Case as to many things enjoyn'd ; we judge them unlawful, you say they are indifferent ; and therefore without Necessity you breed Discords and Strife among Christians. So that, tho 'twere suppos'd the Imposers had really a Title to a much larger Power than my Notions do allow, yet I can't see how they can excuse themselves from blame, while they insist on such things. Let me now consider what you say concerning a just Occasion of Alterations, You say, *Nothing else can be such, but the attaining a greater Good by them, than can be attain'd without them.* Now here you think 'tis to be consider'd, whether the Alterations contended for by us, will not do as much hurt one way, by shutting the Door closer than needs be against the Papists, as it may do good, by opening the Door wider than needs be to the Dissenters. But the Answer to this

this is easy ; Set the Door as Christ and his Apostles left it, and then the Blame will lie on those who do not come in on either side. But 'tis a little strange that you, Sir, who can't but understand the monstrous Opinions of the Papists, should think that these little things in dispute should, if laid aside, be any Hinderance to the Papists coming over to us, supposing them convinc'd of the great Matters asserted by Protestants in Opposition to them. Will a Man that believes the Doctrines of Transubstantiation, Infallibility, Purgatory, &c. to be false and abominable, remain in that Church for the sake of a Surplice, the Sign of the Cross, &c. I profess you amaze me by such Discourse : If you will not see, you are to be pitied, I will not say for your Intellectuals, but for your Obstinacy. But the thing is plain, that the Difference between you and the Papists is in such vastly greater things, that the keeping of these little Matters, is the most inconsiderable Trifle in the World toward the gaining of them ; but I think our Differences are so small, as that they may easily be accommodated. So that here is a greater Good that is really very probable, and the Danger on the other hand is grounded only on a trifling Surmize.

But you go on, and tell us, that *to this must be added, that such Alterations may become a stumbling Block to some that are at present of our own Communion, and who may possibly be so weak as to think more highly of the things to be laid aside than they ought ; and therefore go over from us to the Papists on that Account.*

I'm glad you speak this ; I doubt not it would have been reckon'd a Crime in any one else, to say, That *some of your Communion are so weak, as to think more highly of those things than they ought.* And hence I see that the Church-men, according to your self, are not all agreed, any more than the Dissenters ; and that it were easy to make such a Representation of you, as you have done of us, and that on better Grounds than you can pretend ; as you may see by comparing what I say in my Third Letter. But I would fain know what you mean, *by their thinking of these things more highly than they ought.* I can't see but that if they think of them so highly, as to be willing to swallow all the monstrous Doctrines, Superstitions, and Idolatries of the Romish Church with them, (which is the Case you put) they must look upon them as fundamental and essential things with a Witness, and not as indifferent and alterable ; and consequently they must practise these Commandments of Men as taught for Doctrines : And you say your self, *p. 15. of your First Letter to a Dissenting Parishioner, That Christ rebukes the Jews for teaching such their Traditions (as are mentioned, Mat. 15.) for Doctrines,*

that is, making them of equal Obligation and Necessity with the Commandments of God. Hence therefore I infer, that such an Apprehension of these Things is sinful, and consequently your own Argument does condemn you, and shews the Necessity of those Alterations against which you alledge it. For hence 'tis plain, that the retaining these Things does really tend to lead such Men into Sin, while they use them in such a manner; and by this means the Consciences of your weak Brethren among your selves are wounded. I have often thought this Argument had weight in it, but did not expect you would ever give me such Occasion to make Use of it: You may try how you can get off it.

But I will be so free with you as to ask you one Question; and that is, Whether you do in your Conscience believe that any one good Christian in your Communion would by such Alterations be tempted to believe Transubstantiation, &c. and so to go over from you to the Church of Rome? In my Apprehension all those Persons you can suppose your selves in danger of losing, are such, as are real Blemishes in any Church, and should be rather turn'd out than kept in. And do you think that by Alterations you shall gain none from the Dissenters worth having? Why then are you so desirous to perswade them to come over to you?

1st. You say the farthest Alterations *that can with a good Conscience be consented to by a true Church-man, even in things not necessary, is only this, that every Person may be left to his own Liberty, or to follow his own Perswasion in these Particulars, to wit, to have God-fathers, or have none, to have his Child sign'd or not sign'd with the Cross.* Here I think I may assure you, that I know several who differ so much from you, as to give a just Foundation for their being call'd Low-Church-men. But let that pass. I say then, if this be the lowest, and you have fully express'd your Mind, it will not do; for the utmost you go, is to leave Parents at Liberty: But for ought I see, the Minister must be oblig'd to comply with the Parents Desire, let it be one way or the other. If you intend more than you express, viz. that the Minister shall have his Liberty also, and where Minister and Parent can't agree, it shall be allowed the Parent to apply himself to another who will agree to his Desire; this will fully remove this Part of our Difference.

2dly. You say *there can be no good or just Occasion, but when a CERTAIN Good will follow.* I thought such short-sighted Creatures, as we all are, must often act on far less Assurance than what you demand. A probable Good may be Reason enough for Alterations. But any one may see what all this means, and

and you sufficiently discover elsewhere your Aversion to any Alterations whatever. But suppose there were no other certain Good did ensue but the reforming your selves, and the rendring the Dissenters inexcusable, this were a just and weighty Occasion enough for Alterations, as the Case stands with you.

But you say *it must be consider'd, (1.) Whether it will not become requisite to this End, that all the Dissenters that are come to Years of Discretion should in the first Place give it under their Hands, that such Alterations and Concessions will satisfie them, and should by some or other valuable Obligation strictly engage themselves to leave off their Separation, as soon as ever the said Concessions should be made, &c.* Well then, if this is a Matter to be consider'd, and all were of your Mind, I would for ever abandon all thoughts of Union. Must this be the only thing to be reckon'd a certain Good? Suppose one half of the Dissenters were gain'd, were it not worth your while to make Alterations, to rescue so many Souls out of that State of Damnation, which you apprehend them in on the Account of their Schism? If you think not, you are of a Mind as opposite to his, whose Ministers you pretend to be, as is Darknes to Light. Interest will oblige the Dissenters to fall in with those Concessions they seek for, and therefore there is no need of our giving it under our Hands. What valuable Obligation you mean, I know not, but imagine it must be such as you would not care Church-men should come under, not to return again to their old Encroachments.

(2.) You say *'tis to be consider'd, whether though all the present Dissenters that are at Age should hereby be brought over, yet it may not be reasonably fear'd, that in 10 or 12 Years a New Generation may arise (in short) of Dissenters.* Suppose it, yet you have sav'd the Present according to your own Notions: But I think 'tis not to be doubted, that if Church-Communion be set on a Scripture-Foot, there will be no Danger of this among serious Christians. Humane Impositions tend to Division, Divine only to Peace and Unity. But you will shew that *this is a supposable Case from what has been already*, and here you tell me a Story which you *have heard*: But perhaps you know not when, nor where you heard it. The Story I alledg'd I had, as I said, from a Person of Credit, and could easily have it most solemnly confirm'd, if needful, and contains nothing incredible in it; and perhaps your self are not unacquainted with an English Bishop much of the same Mind. I have heard as much of him, but not having that Evidence I had in the other Case, did not mention him. But you tell us a Story not very credible, and do not so much as tell us, whether you be-

lieve

lieve it your self. 'Tis not easy to believe Men would not keep a Copy by them of what they deliver'd, nor is it probable they would begin with specifying the Alterations they desir'd. But such sort of Stories the Dissenters are us'd to, and much such another you may see confuted in the Appendix to *Mr. Baxter's Life*, p. 108. But then you argue in the next place from what I say, that 'tis one receiv'd Principle of the Dissenters, that no Man or Body of Men are the Standard of Truth; and that their Notions are not to be enslav'd to the Sentiments of those whom they most value. And I humbly ask you, Whether this is not the receiv'd Principle of all Protestants of the Church of *England*, and even, Sir, of your self? Who is the Man, or which is the Body of Men you esteem the Standard of Truth? Whom do you so value as to enslave your Notions to their Sentiments? You talk like a Man hugely fond of Infallibility; Please to inform the World, when you know, where to fix it: In the mean while give me leave to remember the Direction of Christ, who is indeed the Standard of Truth, *Call no Man Father on Earth*, Matt. 23. 9. As to what you add, I think I never did desire an Alteration of any Fundamental in Religion, unless you are to be Judge.

You say, That *I may hence learn how far 'tis in the Power of the Church to end the Division*. But I see no Power the Church has to alter one thing establish'd by Act of Parliament: Thank God for it; or else the poor Dissenters must have been in as sorry a Case as ever. The Church may do much to procure Alterations, but I never could hear of any Instance of a general Willingness and Readiness to do any thing, except when they were afraid of being over-run with Popery in King *James II's* Time. And so you may easily judge what I mean by saying, *'Tis in the Power of the Parliament to remove those things which keep the Breach wide open*: That is, that as the Obligation that lies on those of the establish'd Communion, to observe the things in Dispute, is from the Parliament, they can alter the Obligation at Pleasure: And since you shew such an Aversion to Alterations, I can't think it would be a Reflection on the Wisdom of the Parliament, to take that Matter into Consideration; and to endeavour by New Acts to unite those whom former Acts have separated one from another.

You are free to apply those Words, *APOSTOLICAL CONSTITUTION*, to what you please. I assure you I neither believe the three-fold Order to be such, nor will I ever so subscribe it; and that is now under Debate between us. As to the Common Prayer, I should be glad, if you reckon that also among the Apostolical Constitutions (as you seem to do) that you would

would direct me to the Chapter and Verse where I may find it; for I know not where to look for it at present. And whatever were the Calamities that ensued on those Former Troubles in State as well as Church, they were owing to other Causes, which 'twere easy to declare, would they not be disagreeable to your self. What you add in the next Paragraph is answer'd already.

And for your Prayer, Sir, if it proceed from Brotherly Love, and Christian Charity; I thank you for it, and shall earnestly desire the Prayers of all good Christians upon the same account. I own I am subject to *covetous Desires*, and need Grace to make me more and more forsake them, which I also make it my Business to endeavour. I own that such kind of Desires have been a strong Temptation to me to be of your Mind; but I bless God my Integrity I hold fast, and trust that by his Grace I always shall do so, and not deliberately forsake the way of my Duty. But if your Prayer is (as I suppose any one will esteem it) design'd for a Slander, as though covetous Desires were the Reason of my Non-Conformity; Don't think that your Malice will be sanctify'd by your putting it into a Prayer: No, Sir, it is more heinous in the Sight of God, than if it were simply express'd, while you prophane God's Name, and abuse the Duty of Prayer, to cover your Violation of his Commandment.

I think there is nothing in your Letter at the end to a Dissenting Parishioner, that needs any Answer: I shall therefore only take notice of one Passage or two, that by them the Reader may judge of the rest. You would represent the Dissenting Ministers as spreading false Reports, and not scrupling to pervert the Counsels and Designs of a Parliament, in order to encourage their Followers in their Schism and Separation. Because some of your Parishioners have taken upon them to tell you of *somewhat agitated the last Session, in opposition to your Judgment of our Separation being a Schism or a damnable Sin*. But is it not hard, that the Dissenting Ministers must be charg'd after this rate, for a little Mistake in the words of those, *Whose Business* (as you tell us) *lies most among the bellowing of Cattle and bleating of Sheep*? Put but the word Parliament instead of Session, and all is easy and clear, and you know it to be most true. And could you not easily have help'd them over this Difficulty? I think you might *without much spending your self, or being spent for them*. And I suppose there may be the like Reason for your talking of false Reports, industriously spread abroad, concerning what pass'd between your most worthy Diocesan and your self at his late Visitation. Some improper Term, it is likely, has been used by an honest Country-man, who pretends not to nicety of Language,

guage, and that you think a sufficient Ground for you to make Complaint of false Reports. I am not concern'd to know what pass'd between you and your Diocesan, for whom I have a great Value, and who, I persuade my self, is a Man of too moderate Counsels and Spirit to approve of your boisterous and turbulent Uncharitableness; and I assure you I rejoiced at his Pre-ferment, and do reckon him an excellent Ornament of your Church: But perhaps suspect, that he is yet upon his good Behaviour with you, whether it may be more truly said of him, that he is a Bishop in, than of the Church of *England*.

And thus I think I have highly honour'd this trifling Scribble by a particular Answer. I earnestly request you, that you would hereafter, if not for my sake, yet out of a Regard to your own Credit and Cause, write with more Care and Evidence. If the Advice of my Friends had reach'd me before this was near finish'd, 'tis probable I had sav'd my self the Labour, and not answer'd what I will take leave to say, really neither needed nor deserv'd an Answer from,

Reverend Sir,

Your most Affectionate, and

Faithful Servant in Christ,

JAMES PEIRCE.

A Sixth Letter Address'd to Dr. Wells, in Answer to his Letter concerning his own, and the Author's Theses about Presbyterian Ordination.

Honoured Doctor;

HAVING comply'd with your Motion of dividing the second Part of your Letter to Mr. D. into three distinct Parts, and publish'd a Sheet in answer to what you were pleas'd to advance in Defence of the first Part; I was expecting an Answer from you to that Sheet at least: But instead of that, I receiv'd yours of the 20th of *January*, relating only to a very small and inconsiderable part of either your own, or my Letter concerning the Subject of our present Controversy.

You propose, *p. 4.* to consider *two or three of your own Theses*, but speak to but one of them, which needed not to be spoken to at all: And of my 24 Theses you consider but two: It appears therefore to me that you resolve to make a long Squabble, to which I assure you I have no Inclination. If you always take this Method, and when I fairly answer at once whatever you advance, you will split every one of my Answers, after this
your

your new Fashion into so many Parts, for ought I see the longer we write, the farther we are from the End of the Controversy. I can leave it with any impartial and judicious Reader to judge, whether my Theses were not sufficiently clear in expressing what was of such Moment in the Controversy, as to deserve a particular Answer, and whether the pretended Reason of the Delay of an Answer to 22 of them, has any good ground; and withal, whether there is any thing in your whole Letter to answer the Title Page, since you neither attempt to prove that any one of your Propositions does, or any one of mine does not hold good.

My Fourth Letter began with these Words: *Tho I do not well understand the Reason why you are pleas'd to break your Answer to me (who have already so fully express'd my Mind in my Remarks) into so many distinct Parts, as you now propose, yet, &c. And with reference to this you tell me, it seems very strange to you that I should use such an Expression, since you had taken care to make the Reason of your so doing as clear as possible, even to any common Understanding.*

But if you had taken due Notice of that Parenthesis, which you leave out; but I have now again inserted, it needed not to have seem'd at all strange to you. For when I had so fully express'd my Mind in my Remarks, there could be no need to proceed so gradually as you propose. If I had spoken darkly and obscurely, there might have been some Pretence for this; but as the Case stands, and I had giv'n a distinct Answer to your Arguments, I can't see why you should not have made it your Business to have clear'd and vindicated them all at once. I did therefore then think the Reason you pretended was (as you express your self elsewhere) *a Flam*: And that in Imitation of the Learned Chaldeans, Dan. 2. you were endeavouring by a shuffling Answer to gain the time, and stave off the main Controversy, and so perhaps tire out your Adversary, as well as your Reader. And in this Apprehension, your last Letter has very much confirm'd me, as I doubt not it will many others.

And thus I'm got half way through your Letter, and am now to consider what you say concerning your first Thesis, which is,

Thesis I. The Validity of any Ordination does immediately depend on the valid Authority of him or them, by whom is perform'd the said Ordination.

In reference hereunto I had these Words: *Your first Proposition, I conceive, does not affect the Controversy, for the Controversy being, Whether Presbyters have valid Authority to ordain as well as Bishops; if it appear they have, Presbyterian Ordination will be safe and valid, tho the Proposition be granted: And therefore to*

avoid the lengthning the Dispute, I will answer your other Propositions on Supposition of the Truth of this.

There are three things in this Paragraph, which displease you, which I shall now consider.

The first I shall consider is, what I alledge to be the Controversy, viz. *Whether Presbyters have valid Authority to ordain as well as Bishops.* And this you deny to be the Controversy; forasmuch as both the Word [Presbyters] and also the Word [Bishops] are each capable of, and have been us'd in various Significations. But you say it is this, *Whether Presbyters, so call'd at the time of the Reformation, have valid Authority to ordain, as well as Bishops so call'd at the said time of the Reformation?* And much to the same purpose is your 18th Page. But have I not fully clear'd this Matter, and taken Care to prevent this empty jangling? Have I not expressly deny'd the ambiguous Use of the word Presbyter, when taken for an Office? *Let. 1. p. 44.* Have I not expressly deny'd Bishops and Presbyters to be two distinct sacred Offices? Why do you not prove that Ambiguity which you talk so much of? And shew some good Foundation for your Distinction (p. 18.) of Presbyters properly so call'd, and the other sort of Presbyters, what-ever Name you will call them by? Again, had I not expressly deny'd,

Prop. X. That the Scripture does distinguish two Offices, the one with the Power of Ordination, Preaching and Administring Sacraments; and the other with the Power only of Preaching, and Administring Sacraments? Could any thing be more full than these, and several things more are to shew how I understood the word Presbyters? Could any Man doubt of my Meaning? Is it not evident that I endeavour to prove that there is but one sort of Presbyters mention'd in the New Testament? And that to them belongs the Power of Ordination? And consequently this Power is lodg'd in all those that are rightly ordain'd to that sacred Office? It matters not at all what Notions they had at the Reformation. The Question is, Whether those that are ordain'd Presbyters, are ordain'd to a Sacred Office instituted in the New Testament; if they are, they must have all those Powers God has annex'd to that Office, and consequently that of Ordination.

Another thing you dislike in that Paragraph, is, that I say, *Your Thesis does not affect the Controversy.* And you endeavour to prove it does, *because the Truth or Falsity of it affects the Controversy.* The Falsity thus; If the Proposition is false, then the contrary is true; and so the Controversy is needless. The Truth thus; That if the Falsity of it shews the Controversy needless, the Truth of it shews it needful. This is in short your Argument: And to it I answer; That our Controversy is not;

not, whether the Controversy it self be needful ; but whether Presbyterian Ordination be valid ? And this can be only affected by a Proposition which serves to determine it, as this does not. The Falsity of it affects it only on my side ; and so, if I thought fit, I might make use of the contrary Proposition : But it does not at all affect the Controversy on your side ; for if it be false, no Conclusion can be justly drawn from it as tho it were true : And then on the other hand, the Truth of it does not affect the Controversy, since, if it be true, you can't make any use of it in the present Controversy, because as that lies between us, it will serve on either side, to shew that Ordination valid which is perform'd by Persons who appear to have valid Authority to ordain. And therefore tho this Proposition may affect other Controversies about Ordination, yet ours it does not. And I think all Men will grant, that that Proposition may be justly said not to affect a Controversie ; which, when granted, will contribute nothing to the determining of the Controversie it self. Your own words, *p. 14.* confirm this ; ' In a Word, ' my first Proposition is the only Basis, or Ground-truth, where- ' on the Validity of any Ordination, Episcopal or Presbyterian, ' is firmly to be built. Now if this be true, the Controversie between us can never be determin'd by this Proposition ; it serves indifferently on either side, till by other Arguments it be made appear who have, and who have not valid Authority to ordain.

Another thing you are displeas'd with, is, *That tho I do at present grant your Proposition, and suppose the Truth of it, yet this is out of my meer Grace and Favour, in order to avoid lengthening the Dispute, and not out of any Necessity I lie under to do so, by reason of the Certainty and Evidence of the Truth therein contain'd.* And here you insist on my speaking particularly and fully to the Truth or Falshood of that Proposition. The Reader may here evidently see how very different your Aim is from mine : I am for shortening the Dispute, and passing over such Propositions as do not relate to it : And on the contrary, you insist on the debating a Question, wholly foreign to it.

I think, according to all the Rules of Disputation, a Respondent (and my only Business is to act that Part while I am answering your Theses) is bound only to grant or deny what is advanc'd by his Adversary. And no such Terms were ever put on any Respondent, as you pretend to put upon me. I have granted you your Thesis, and when you find me retract my Concession, then you may complain ; and in the mean while make the best use you can of it, my Cause does not need the Denial of it ; and I resolve not to give you Scope to gratify your Humour of running away from the Point in hand : And if my granting your

Proposition in this way will not satisfy you, you must in short expect no Satisfaction from me. I could easily tell you how many needless Controversies I hereby prevent, which would delay our coming to the Merits of the Cause: And since I grant it you, you will best shew that it affects the Controversie, by using it as a Medium to prove the Invalidity of Presbyterian Ordination; which I do not expect to see done by you to any good Purpose.

Next I proceed to consider what you say to my two first Theses. The first is,

Th. I. That no Office can be justly look'd on as sacred, which God has not appointed.

This you deny, if I mean *which God himself has not appointed*; but grant, if I mean *he has not appointed it himself, or by some other, divinely commission'd and authoriz'd*. Now my Meaning is, that no Office can be justly look'd upon as sacred, which God has not appointed himself, or by some other divinely commission'd or authoriz'd THEREUNTO. That is, I think it very possible, that those who may be commission'd Officers and Rulers in his Church, may pretend to set up a new sort of Officers therein, without any particular Instructions for their so doing; and in this Case, since neither their general Commission, nor any special Inspiration, do warrant their Proceedings, I deny that any such Office devis'd by them, can be justly look'd on as *any way appointed by God*, or therefore as *sacred*: And consequently, according to *Prop. III.* I deny that any Office can be look'd on as sacred, which we find not in the New Testament.

My Second Thesis is,

II. The Offices which God has appointed, and the Powers which he has respectively annexed to them, are inseparable.

And as to this I need only let you know, that I understand it in that Sense only in which you grant it. I own the same Power may be annex'd to more Offices than one; but I assert, that no sacred Office can be depriv'd of any Power which God has annex'd to it. And this you might easily see by the Use I make of it in my fourth Proposition, and the way in which I there apply it.

And thus I have consider'd your Letter; all that remains is your Postscript.

And here in the beginning you put on the Air of a wonderful mild and peaceable Person, willing to *undergo any Personal Reflections unjustly cast upon you*. But this Air does not at all become you, who have been so free in casting personal Reflections upon me, without any Shadow of Reason, as I have shewn in my Third Letter. For my own part, I hate Personal Matters brought into a Controversie, and was heartily sorry I was forc'd

to say so much on that Head in my own necessary Defence.

That the Reader may understand the Matter of this Postscript, I must acquaint him, that whereas you did in your Letter to Mr. D. charge false Doctrine in Eleven Instances on the Dissenting Teachers, I told you, you had mistaken the Dissenters. In answer to this, you tell us in your Examination, p. 14. *In short, the Reason why you singled out those Eleven Particulars of false Doctrine rather than others, was this, Because they were such as had been most frequently OBJECTED to you by the Dissenters with whom you had discoursed.* And to this the Second Part of my Postscript related; where I say, *I have hinted in my Letter some Reasons why I did not think the Doctor had fairly represented the Objections of the Dissenters he had to do with: And I am since inform'd, that an Enquiry has been made among his Parishioners, and that they disown those Objections, and say they are of the Doctor's own devising, and complain of their being abus'd by him.*

Your first Answer to this will not seem plausible, to those who consider what I have alledg'd, to shew how improbable it is that ever any Dissenters should make some of those Objections; and particularly those contain'd in your first and last Instances, are such as I shrewdly suspect you can never fasten upon any of them.

Do you think your own Dissenting Parishioners did not know that Mr. D. receiv'd Pay? Or could they know it, and yet make the Objection you answer in your last Instance? And however, was it not disingenuous in you to charge such false Doctrine; when it appears plainly by several Passages in your Writings, that you knew Mr. D. did receive Pay? But however, if you are at all *satisfy'd in their disowning those Objections*, I see no Reason why I should not be satisfy'd also.

In your Second Answer, you expect *your bare Word should be (at least) as soon taken as theirs.* I leave that with you to the impartial Reader; but only I will give you this hint, that a Man who expects his Word should be taken by others, should shew so much Civility himself, as not to be forward and confident in charging others, as you have done over and over Mr. D. and my self, *with Untruths, down-right Quibbles, Flams, &c.* In short, the Liberty you take of mis-representing me, gave me a Jealousie you had not truly represented them.

And I can easily think you have some other Reason beside what you set down, why you, who so freely charge Mr. D. and my self with Untruths, are yet so sparing of the Names of others.

But I see you have left room still for another Evasion, for you say, *You are able to name the Persons, who either in their Discourses have expressly made use of the said Objections, or else by their*

their Behaviour have given you sufficient Ground to infer, they were carried away with such Objections. So that they may be able truly to deny the Objections; and yet you think you can prove them upon them, not from their *Words*, but from their *Behaviour*. You will do well to give us some Explication: Suppose you egregiously mistook their Behaviour, and they say it had quite another Meaning. In short, Sir, you are the most accomplished Person in the Art of Shuffling I ever yet met with: First you charge the Dissenting Teachers with teaching false Doctrine, because the People hold such and such Doctrines, and their Teachers do not go about to undeceive them; and now the People are charg'd, not for their making these false Doctrines their own Objections, but because their holding them may be infer'd from their Behaviour. Certainly this kind of Evidence would not pass in any Court, nor will it be regarded by Men of Sense. This does not look like the Discourse of a Man innocent in the Matter charg'd upon him.

You seem to lay a great Stress on your *Third Answer*, which has no manner of Strength in it.

You talk of your *Letter to a Dissenting Parishioner*, with which I was not in the least concern'd when I wrote my first Letter, having then never read it. And can it seem strange to any Man, that your Parishioners should never complain that you had abus'd them, by publishing those Eleven Instances as their Objections, when you do not pretend in that Letter to have learn'd them of them? This Pretence was started in your Examination; and no sooner did it appear, but it was complain'd of. I never put the *Evasion* into their Heads, nor did I any ways directly or indirectly move that an Enquiry should be made: But after I had sent my Letter to the Press, that Information was sent me, That an Enquiry had been made, and that some of your Parishioners on the reading of the 14th Page of your Examination, had themselves taken notice of the Abuse: So that I think this Matter is made sufficiently clear.

I confess, when I came to read *your Letter to a Dissenting Parishioner*, I could easily perceive that you father'd some of your Objections therein on your Parishioners; and therefore when I was writing my Second Letter, I did desire a Friend to enquire whether they own'd those Objections; and receiv'd an Answer, That they had mention'd some of them in Discourse with you, naming the Particulars. And whatever Opinion others may have of them, I look'd on the Answer as an Evidence they were plain, honest and well-meaning Men: And I make no doubt, but they would have as freely own'd your Eleven Instances, as they did some of your Objections in *that Letter to a*

Dissenting Parishioner, if there had been as good Reason for it! So that you may now see that *this Subject*, when rightly understood, *will afford no Matter for Ridicule* (unless you are dispos'd to ridicule your self.) I can't but think you have Inclination enough that way, your whole Management shews it; but you want an Opportunity. And tho I am not fond of citing Scraps of Latin, yet I fear not the Judgment of any impartial Person, whether the exposing what is extreamly ridiculous, as I did, is either *pedantick* or *foolish*: Or whether even that way I took, was not (as, I design'd it) expressive of a just neglect of what was so excessively trifling.

In your Fourth Answer, you tell me of some *Dissenters* (who live not far off) who say, that not you, but I, have mis-represented them; and are displeas'd, and down-right angry with me, for disowning their Opinions, as not to be defended.

For my part, I never pretended that all the Dissenters were of my Mind; nor do I think it strange, if some of them should dislike some things which I say. But I must confess, it seems a little strange to me, that any of them should say, *you had not mis-represented them*. I profess I know no Dissenter, whether Presbyterian, Independent, or Anabaptist, who will say so of your first or last Instance. And they can have no Reason to say, that *I have mis-represented them*, who never pretended to make any Representation of their Opinions at all, but only of such Opinions as were more generally held among the Dissenters; and therefore I doubt not but upon Consideration, their Anger will be pacified, especially since I leave it most freely to them, to make what Representation they please of their own Opinions. But this I can say, that my Representation has been favourably receiv'd among all those differing Perswasions, so far as I could ever hear, till you sent me this Information. And if I may be worthy to know what Corner those Dissenters live in, I will give my self the Trouble to enquire into the Reasons of their Displeasure, that I may remove them. And if it will be any means to engage you to give me such a kind Information, I will give you a somewhat-like one concerning the Reception of your Writings in this Town; and that is, That whereas your Party were very confident in their Boastings of your Performance as unanswerable, before the Remarks appear'd; we hear now nothing of that nature, but they are as silent in the Matter, as tho' they were asham'd of you; and some of them have expressly said as much.

Your last Consideration is strangely unaccountable; for whereas you charge those Opinions on the common Dissenters, and then on their Teachers, *Exam. p. 51.* And at the End of your

your Eleven Instances, say to Mr. D. Let. to Mr. D. p. 21. *These, Sir, are the several Instances of false Doctrine spread abroad, and taught by the false Teachers of these Times, &c. 'Tis*

plain you design'd to represent those Instances, as taught by the Dissenters. See my 3d Let. p. 9.

And therefore if they are not taught by them, you have mis-represented them. And if your Testimonies are a Contradiction to this, I am not concern'd in the Matter: It belongs to you, and not to me, to reconcile them to your Letter.

And if there be any thing in what you say, why did you not give up the Charge? Why did you ask me that Question? *Exam. Part I. p. 16. Whether tho I deny that the Dissenting Teachers do openly teach some of those Particulars, yet I am not conscious to my self, they do by several ways intimate to the People their Approbation, or at least their not dislike of them.*

And thus, Sir, I have answer'd this very trifling Letter. I expect now, that without any more ado, you attempt a distinct Answer to all my Theses, and a Vindication of all yours. And unless you do so, I must see better Reasons than I can at present, to make me write any more. And had I not another Answer to join with this, I should never publish it by it self. I delight not to impose upon the Reader with filling Pages with needless Repetitions. Come therefore at length close to the Controversie; and let me see that you are willing to bring it to some Issue; (for tho I am willing to do any thing that can be reasonably desir'd toward the clearing the Truth, yet I abhor an endless and unprofitable Wrangling.) And give me Occasion to write an Answer of some just Size, and I will not (God willing) fail you: Or otherwise I now take leave of you; heartily thankful for the great Confirmation my Opinion has receiv'd by the means of your weak Opposition; and so I recommend you to the Divine Blessing, wishing you good Health, and a sound Judgment;

And Remain,

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Honoured Doctor,

Newbury, Feb.
the 12th, 1706.

Your most Affectionate,
And Faithful Servant
In Christ,

James Peirce.

A
Continuation
OF THE
DEFENCE
OF THE
REMARKS
ON
Dr. *WELLS's*
LETTERS.

In a Seventh Letter to the Doctor.

By *JAMES PEIRCE.*

L O N D O N,
Printed by *J. Humfreys*, for *John Lawrence*,
at the Angel in the *Poultrey*. 1707.



*A Continuation of the Defence of the Remarks
on Dr. Well's Letters.*

Honoured Doctor;

THE first thing I am concern'd to take notice of in your last to me, (*Numb. 2.*) is the Marginal Note, pag. the 5th, in which you desire me *to reconcile my Assertion, that there is but one sort of Presbyters mentioned in the New Testament, with the general Doctrine of my Party, viz. of a twofold sort of Presbyters, mentioned in the New Testament, i. e. Clergy Presbyters, and Lay-Presbyters.* My desire is to think freely, and to have my Judgment biased with a regard to no Party, but as they agree with the Truth, as I have told you before, *Lett. 4. p. 74.* And I desire for the future, I may not be put upon reconciling my Assertions to any thing else, tho' you can't but know, I'm far from being the only Dissenter who is of this Opinion.

Pag. 7. You can't yet digest it, that I should say, *Your first Proposition does not affect the Controversie.* The Case is plainly this. Our Adversaries say, our Ordinations are not valid; as being perform'd by Persons, who have no valid Authority to ordain: And we say, they are valid, because perform'd by Persons, who have valid Authority to ordain: And we put it on this Issue, whether Presbyters have valid Authority or no: And your first Proposition will not help to determine that. That Proposition therefore do's not in the least touch our Cause; for if the valid Authority of the Ordainers is evinced (and 'tis of that we dispute) What can that Proposition signifie to prove the Invalidity of our Ordinations?

A little Matter of Logick will help any Man to see the Justness of my Assertion, and I am free to leave it entirely with those, who have any skill in that Art, to judge to what purpose you have multiplied Words on this Head. I shall therefore dismiss this vain kind of Strife, with this brief Illustration of the Matter, by a parallel Instance.

Suppose a Man were engag'd in a Controversie, whether the Earth or Sun mov'd, and undertook to prove that the Sun mov'd, and should lay down a great number of Propositions for that End, and should begin with such as these. 1. That Motion's a possible thing. 2. That it not only is possible, but actually exists.

ists. 3. That it actually exists in this planetary World, &c. ~~Would not his Adversary laugh at his Pomp and Gravity, and tell him, That these Propositions do not affect the Controversie?~~ But how easie were it for him to answer as you do, and tell his Adversary, That these Propositions do nearly affect the Controversie, and offer the same Proof you do.

Whose Truth or Falsity affect this Controversie, those Propositions affect this Controversie.

The Truth or Falsity of these Propositions affect this Controversie.

Therefore these Propositions affect this Controversie.

And then add with you; *The Major is evident, and therefore I prove the Minor; and first, the falsity of these Propositions affects this Controversie: For if Motion be not a thing possible, or actually existing, or not in this planetary World, the whole Controversie, whether the Earth or Sun moves, is needless; and if the falsity of them shews the Controversie needless, the truth of them shews it needful: And then he might very gravely inform his Adversary, That these are the Bases or Ground-Truths, on which the Doctrine, of either the Earth's or Sun's Motions is built. Just thus 'tis in the Case between us; and I leave it to your self, and the Reader to follow the Parallel, which will clear whatever you have advanced on this Head.*

Your common Instance, pag. 9. of a Bucket drawn up by a Chain, with many Links in it, is admirably witty, and ingenious. I shall give no better answer to it than it deserves; and that is, that you have shewn us (*I think you may say to a demonstration*) that a long Chain, with a great many Links in it, will serve to draw up an empty Bucket.

You tell me, pag. 12. *that I have now first granted your first Thesis, that is, in my 6th Letter: But that's your mistake, for I granted it as fully as a Respondent is oblig'd, in my 4th Letter, wherein my Words were these; Presbyterian Ordination will be valid, tho' this Proposition be granted: And therefore to avoid the lengthning the Dispute, I shall answer your other, on Supposition of the truth of this.* Pray Sir, inform me, What is the difference between a Respondent's granting a Proposition, and his answering all that his Opponent says, *on supposition of the truth of it?* I assure you, I took these for the same, as may appear by the Connexion I made between those two Sentences, with the Word *Therefore*. But great Logicians, I see, will take the liberty to shew the Exquiteness of their Skill sometimes, in making a distinction where there is no difference.

Pag. 16, and 17. You charge me with an *Inconsistency*, because, in my Answer to your first Thesis, I grant, *that the Validity of any Ordination, do's immediately depend on the valid Authority of him*
or

or them, by whom is performed the said Ordination: And in my answer to your 2d and 3d Theses, I say, the validity of Presbyterian Ordination, depends immediately on another thing: But this charge is easily answer'd. My words in answering your Second Thesis are these. *The Validity of Prebyterian Ordination, according to our present Hypothesis (that is, your first Proposition) depends on two things. (1) The Validity of the Ordination of those Presbyters (who did ordain) to the Office of Presbyters. (2) The Validity of Presbyterian Ordination (supposing the Ordainers rightly ordain'd themselves) depends immediately on the Power annex'd by Divine appointment to the Office of Presbyters.* Now 'tis in these two things that the valid Authority of the Ordainers lies, so that this answer is only an Accommodation of your first Thesis, as a truth, to the matter of your Second, the Validity of Presbyterian Ordination. So that here is not so much as the least shadow of an Inconsistency. With no less Sagacity and mighty Skill in the Rules of Logick, you pretend to find another Inconsistency in my 2d Answer to your 2d Thesis just now recited. And the Inconsistency you say lies herein, that I assert the Validity of Presbyterian Ordination, to depend immediately on the Power annex'd by Divine Appointment to the Office of Presbyters, and yet at the same time expressly own, that there can't be this immediate dependance, without supposing the Ordainers rightly ordain'd themselves. Now (say you) I conceive that (according to Propriety of Speech) a thing can be said immediately to depend only on that, which it depends on without any thing mediating or coming between.

But what is there that here mediates or comes between? I say the Validity of Presbyterian Ordination (supposing the Ordainers rightly ordain'd themselves) depends immediately, &c. That is, the Validity of Presbyterian Ordination perform'd by validly and rightfully ordain'd Presbyters, depends immediately on the Power annexed by Divine appointment to the Office of Presbyters. Good Sir, what is there that here mediates or comes between, that shocks your Understanding with the appearance of a nearer and more immediate cause? I profess, I think 'tis time to begin to ask you whether you have not been in jest all this while? And only designing to try my Understanding in Logick? I hardly think you would be so Familiar in endeavouring to pose me after this sort of rate, and perfectly playing with me, if indeed you were Heartily an Adversary.

But if you are in earnest, I do desire you to cut me out some better Work, than the clearing such plain things as these from Inconsistency or Contradiction. And tho' I don't boast of any great Skill in Logick, yet the great Esteem and Value I have for it,

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extorts from me this humble Petition, that you who boast so continually of your Skill in it, would not tempt Men by your Management, to think 'tis an Enemy to good Sense and Civility, and a Friend to a Vain and Pedantick Captiousness. And by the way, look to your own first *Thesis*, and see whether therein you do not suppose the Ordination regularly perform'd by the Ordainer, and consequently use the word [*Immediately*] just in that Sense which you blame in me.

P. 19. You next attempt to prove your Second and Third *Thesis* by your first. But if you had duly attended to those two things, I mention'd in my answer to your Second *Thesis*, wherein the valid Authority of the Ordainers lies, you would not so slightly have put off your Reader. For if an Ordination is either valid or invalid, according as 'tis perform'd by those that are or are not rightly invested in that Office, to which God has annex'd the power of Ordination, 'tis of no Moment to consider Persons as you do, abstractly from their Office, but your business is to shew that the Ordainers, concerning whom we dispute, either were not rightly Ordain'd themselves, or were not Ordain'd to that Office to which God has annex'd the Power of Ordination.

But I will represent your Argument at length.

Those Persons on whom the Validity of Presbyterian Ordination, practis'd at the Reformation, do's immediately depend, are those Persons by whom was perform'd the said Ordination.

Those Persons call'd Presbyters in the New Testament, are not those Persons by whom was perform'd the said Ordination. Therefore those Persons call'd Presbyters in the New Testament, are not those Persons, on whom the Validity of Presbyterian Ordination, practis'd at the Reformation, do's immediately depend.

I Answer,

1. If you consider the Ordainers Personally, as *Peter, John, Luther, Calvin, &c.* I grant your whole Argument. Nor are we to expect in Scripture the Names of Persons, who should be in after Ages ordain'd Presbyters. And all the consequence of your Argument thus granted, is only this, that as the Scripture do's not tell us who by *Name* should be Officers in after Ages, we are to learn this by comparing Persons Pretensions with the Scripture Rule. 2. If you do not consider Men Personally, but as Officers rightly ordain'd to a Sacred Office, according to the Scripture Rule, I then deny your Minor, that those Persons call'd Presbyters in the New Testament, are not those Persons by whom was perform'd the said Ordination. And the reason of my denial is this; That the word *Presbyter* signifies in the Scripture any one, who is rightly ordain'd to such a particular Sacred Office, and therefore all those who in after Ages are rightly ordain'd

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Presbyters, are the same Officers for kind, with those particularly and personally call'd Presbyters in the New Testament, and so are really call'd Presbyters in the New Testament. And I ask you; whether Presbyters now are not to look on themselves as bound to the Duties requir'd of Presbyters in the New Testament? and how can that be, but as they are such (*i. e.* the same kind of Officers) as are call'd Presbyters in the New Testament? Or let me ask you; whether the Text, 1 Tim. 5. 17. *Let the Elders that rule well be counted worthy of double Honour, especially they who labour in the Word and Doctrine*: or that, v. 19. *Against an Elder receive not an accusation but before two or three Witnesses*, are to be understood of Presbyters to the end of the World or no? And if they are, then all those who are rightly ordain'd to the Office of Presbyters are call'd Presbyters in the New Testament.

I come now to consider what you say to my Propositions. And since we are agreed about the two first of them, I think it needless to say any thing more concerning them, and therefore shall begin with what you say, p. 23. concerning my third Proposition, which is this;

'Tis only by the Scriptures we are to judge what Offices are of Divine appointment, and what Powers do respectively belong to them, and when they are regularly convey'd.

You grant *we are to judge only by the Scriptures, as the Original or Primary Rule*; but deny we are only to judge by them so far as to exclude all consideration of, or regard to the Practice of the Primitive Church in the Ages next succeeding, as being the best Comment on the Scriptural Rule, (and so a secondary Rule) in Disputable Cases, and more especially in such Cases as relate to Matter of Fact.

I have not said any thing, from whence it can be Inferred, that I am for excluding all Consideration of, or regard to *Primitive Practice*. I care not how much is allow'd to it, so it be only consider'd as a *Comment*, and we do not mistake it for the Text of the Rule it self, or do not confound the Text by it. In short, to speak plainly my Mind, where the Scripture goes before them, I am well pleased with an Illustration and Comment from their Practice; But since the Scriptures are allow'd to be the *Primary or Original Rule*, I hope we may Correct the Secondary one, which has only the Nature of a *Comment* when it differs from it, either contradicting it, or vouching for any thing not to be found in it. The Will of God in all these Matters is our Rule, and the Holy Scriptures are therefore our Rule, because we are sure they contain a Revelation of the Will of God. But I am not sure of the consonancy of any thing else to the Will of God, but as I find it consonant to this Revelation. And I think God will never blame Men for keeping to the *Primary Rule*, tho they act against the
Secondary

Secondary one: Since he has not giv'n us in the *Primary* one an Intimation of any other Rule we are to go by. Nay, I will be free to say, that the very Practice of the Apostles themselves, is not any farther a Rule necessarily obliging us, than as their Practice is contain'd and set forth in the Scriptures. For I can't understand how any thing necessary to be observ'd by us, can be suppos'd left out of the Revelation which God has given us of his Will to be our Rule. And since you seem to lay some stress on this Rule, *in disputable Cases, and more especially in such Cases as relate to Matter of Fact*, I'll propose one such Case to your Consideration. You know the Papists have a Controversy with us, for not mixing Water with Wine in the Lord's Supper. Now this disputable Case, relating to Matter of Fact, one would think, should be as liable to a Determination from the Practice of the Primitive Ages as any other, and yet the Church of *England* do's not stand to that Determination. I need not tell you, that this Mixture is mention'd by *Justin Martyr*, who liv'd near the times of *St. John*: and *Cyprian, Epist. 63 ad Caelium*, declares the absolute necessity of this Mixture, and gives us the Signification thereof; I can't say, there was not such a Mixture as this in the Cup which our Lord Bless'd at the first Institution. It might perhaps be the common custom of the Jews, to dilute in that manner their Wines, which might otherwise be too Spirituous for their use. And take the thing in it self, without such Mystical Significations as that given by *Cyprian*, I know not any Practice more Innocent, or which has better Footing in your *Secondary Rule*. And yet in my Apprehension, they do not judge amiss, who think that if 'tis probable from the Practice of Primitive Ages, and any other considerations, that Christ himself did use such a mixture, yet we are not oblig'd necessarily to the same use, in as much as Christ has given us no Intimation of it in that Rule he has left us for our Guide in all these matters. And among those who judge thus, I think, the Church of *England's* to be reckon'd, and so I suppose your self as a Member thereof. So that I am at a great loss to know, when I am to follow this Comment even as a *Secondary Rule*. You tell me that *I dare not be so hardy against Truth, as expressly and barefac'd to assert in my said Proposition, that 'tis only by the Scriptures we are to judge also by what Names the said Offices, &c. are call'd in all Ages after the Scriptures. Wherefore since the Offices themselves and their Names are two very distinct things, it can be no good Inference, that because 'tis only by the Scriptures we are to judge what Offices are of Divine appointment, &c. Therefore 'tis likewise by the Scriptures we are to judge, by what Names the said Offices are call'd in all Ages after the Scriptures. And yet this Inference (tho' altogether Illogical, as it hence appears to be) is what you all along make use of, &c.* I answer, My

My Proposition only considers the Offices themselves: Nor do I ever argue from the bare *Sameness of Names*, but from Persons being *rightly Ordain'd* to the Office of Presbyters, which can be no other than the Scripture-Office of Presbyters, for no Person can be *rightly Ordain'd* to any Office in the Church, but a Scriptural one. And there are no other Scriptural standing Offices but those two of Presbyters and Deacons, so that the whole Controversy turns on these two things, (1) Whether the Presbyters in Controversy were rightly ordain'd to the Office of Presbyters? (2) Whether there be any Third Office to those two mention'd, to which they could be rightly ordain'd? And if there are but these two Offices, and the Presbyters in dispute are *rightly Ordain'd*, they must be ordain'd to one of them; and since 'tis not to that of Deacons, it must be to that of Presbyters, according to the Scripture-account of it. And let me intreat you for once to try to bring your Notions and the Holy Scriptures together a little, if you are not perswaded that they are at such deadly enmity as that there can be no possible agreement between them. And really it seems to me, that we shall otherwise never bring this Controversy to any Issue. For what can it signify whether at the Reformation People understood the Office they spoke of, or Intended to signify and express by the word a very lame and defective Notion of it? But as I see how true the Observation is, that Men are extreamly fond of any thing of their own, and when once they have adopted any Fancy, right or wrong, are not willing and easy to part with it, I will endeavour to gratify you with some Observations relating to the matter, about which you make such a mighty Noise and empty Din: And therefore shall farther add, that the Holy Scriptures, as a Revelation from God, are the best Rule for our speaking as well as judging of things; and such has been the Deference which Christians have ordinarily paid to them, that where the Scriptures have fixed a Religious sense on a Term, they have in using that Term in Religious matters, design'd to express that sense. Unscriptural Terms admit of a greater Variation, as the word Sacrament, &c. But tho' Scriptural Terms have been misunderstood, yet I think the design of those that used them, was to use them in that sense they thought the Scriptures did also. And this has been actually the state of the present Case. The Arguments used by *Ferom* and others, to prove that Presbyters are the same with Bishops, shew us, that they understood by Presbyters no other than those of the Scripture; and in like manner the Arguments used by *Epiptanius* to refute *Aerius*, shew that he thought the Presbyters of his time the same with the Presbyters mentioned in the Scripture. Nay,

the Papists themselves understand by Presbyters those of the same Order with Scripture-Presbyters. For as they hold Seven Orders, they make the highest of them to comprehend both Bishops and Presbyters, as but of one Order. And therefore if we are to fetch our Notions from them, 'tis certain that Presbyters were of that Order that had the power of Ordination. I know they plead for a Superiority of Bishops in the same Order, but then the Question comes to this Issue, according to their Writings, whether in that one Order, God has made a distinction that one sort shall have the Power of Ordination, and the other not? For if he has not, then we may infer even from their opinion, that by Original Right Presbyters have the Power of Ordination. So that by the Writings of those at the Reformation, Presbyters was a Name that signified those of the highest Order of Officers in Christ's Church; and therefore if to the highest Order, without distinction, the power of Ordination did belong by Divine Right, it must thence follow, that their denying them the Power was only their mistake of the nature of the Office. And it may not be amiss here to repeat those Words of Bp. Burnet, who in what I cited from him, Letter 1. p. 75. tells us, it was the common Stile of the Age (*viz. about the time of the Reformation,*) to reckon Bishops and Presbyters the same Office; and why is not he as good a Judge in this matter as your self?

Next let us come down to the Reform'd Church of England. And here the Writers were divided in their Notions of Presbyters, whether they signified Officers who had the Power of Ordination, or such as had not. Some few of the Reformers thought Presbyters had not, but the Generality of them thought they had the Power of Ordination, (as I have shewn in my 4th Letter, p. 75, 76.) and so the poor Presbyters, thro' the unhappy difference of those Writers, are just what you please to make them. And by the way, if a Man were to enquire now in what sense the Word Presbyters is used at present, he could not know; some say one thing, some another. But however, this I think is certain, that the Old Church of England did by Presbyters understand such as are called Presbyters in the Scripture. I'll give one Evidence of this, and that is, that in the old Form of Ordination, the Epistle appointed to be read, when Presbyters were ordain'd, was taken out of the 20th of the Acts. And I would fain know, why they appointed that Epistle to be read then, if they did not look on Presbyters as the same Office with the Presbyters of Ephesus? *Vid. Sparr. Collect. p. 149.* Afterwards indeed when this was thought too great an Honour to Presbyters, the Church thought fit to omit that Epistle, and to transfer it as more proper to the Consecration of Bishops, where it

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now only has place. The plain Consequence of which is, that the Church of later Times has thought Bishops are the Scripture-Presbyters, but that of former Days thought the Presbyters were. 'Tis worth a Man's while to compare the old and new Form together, wherein he will meet with more of this Nature. Farther, if the modern Presbyters are not Scripture-Presbyters, then the Office is now lost, for our Bishops, as contradistinct to Presbyters, are not *they*. For 'tis evident, that Scripture-Presbyters were many in one particular Church, which is directly contrary to the Fundamental Maxim of the Episcopal Scheme. I hope, I have now fully clear'd this matter. I say therefore, that Presbyters has been all along a Scripture-Name for a Scripture-^{Office}, call'd by that Name therein, and the only thing you pretend to alledge against this, is the mistake of some who thought they had not, when they really had the Power of Ordination. And several of my other Propositions are a full Evidence of this, and it was fly in you not to answer them; for if you had done it as you ought, as a fair Disputant, the vanity of your Arguments would have been evident to all.

You may easily see from what I have said, to how little Purpose the Seven Theses you advance, p. 25. are, but I shall however take Notice of them. And,

The third Thesis is this. *The same Word (e. g. Presbyters) may signify in the New-Testament, such as had the power of Ordination, any yet after the times of the New-Testament may, by a different appointment or use, signify such as had not the Power of Ordination.* I answer,

If we consider the Sense or Thought which Persons design'd to signify by the word Presbyters, 'tis very true, that tho' it be used in the New-Testament to signify Persons that had the power of Ordination, yet Men in after-Ages, when they used that Word, might intend to express a confus'd Idea they had form'd in their minds of a sort of Officers of Divine Appointment, superior to Deacons, which had not the Power of Ordination; but yet this do's not in the least hinder, but that the Persons of whom they had such a confus'd and false Idea, might really have the power of Ordination. To make this plain, let us suppose, that in one Age men us'd the word Presbyters to signify their Idea of Men ordain'd in such a particular manner, and who had the power of Ordination; and in the next Age Men used it to signify the Idea of those who had exactly the same Ordination, and yet had not the power of Ordination. I say notwithstanding their confus'd Idea of the Office, and notwithstanding the use to which they design'd to apply the word Presbyters, if they of the former Age had, then they of the latter Age also had the power of Ordination. To apply this now to

our own case. Christ left but one sort of standing Rulers in his Church, and they were not single, but in a Plurality, and these were signify'd by the word Presbyters. But in after times the chief of these Presbyters in a Church came to be look'd on as in a distinct and higher Office than the rest, and appropriated to himself the Name of Bishop, and left the other of Presbyters to his Brethren, who were really of the same Office with himself; and since that, Men in using the Terms Bishops and Presbyters, have referr'd to this difference. If then the Presbyters had Originally the power of Ordination and Government lodg'd in them, the Incroachment of one call'd in after-times the Bishop, and the confus'd and false Ideas of those who thought and spoke of Bishops and Presbyters as distinct Officers, will not make them distinct, or alter the power belonging to Presbyters by Original Right.

To the 4th Thesis I answer briefly, that I grant the Signification of the word Presbyters in a latter Age, (that is, the Idea the Men of the latter Age design'd to express by the Word) *can't be immediately and truly judg'd of by the Writings of a former Age*, (or by the Idea they design'd to express by that Word) but yet I add, that tho' their Idea can't be thus judg'd of, yet the Powers of the Persons they spake of, can be only judg'd of by the Scriptures, supposing them Scripture Officers; and this answers your three following Theses.

P. 29. I think you grant my fourth Proposition. That whenever a Person is rightly ordain'd to any Office of Divine Appointment, he is to be look'd on as invested with all those Powers which do belong to that Office, according to the Scripture, and which appear from thence to have been annex'd by God Himself to it.

But you seem to apprehend the ill Aspect it has on your Cause, and therefore tell me, that *that which has relation hereunto, and is controverted between us, is this; viz. When 'tis that a Person is rightly Ordain'd to that Office of Divine Appointment, whereto belongs the Power of Ordination.* But with an humble Submission, the discussing that belongs to other Propositions, this is a more general one. You add, *And the particular Point which in Relation hereunto, is controverted between us, is truly and plainly no other than this, whether a Person rightly Ordain'd to an Inferior Office, call'd by the same Name whereby it's Superior Office was formerly call'd, does by being Ordain'd to the said Inferior Office, become (on account of the bare sameness of Name) rightly Ordain'd even to the said Superior Office?* But I say this is nothing of the Point controverted between us, and I scorn so silly a Controversy. The Controversy is, whether the Offices you talk of are Superior and Inferior, really and truly, and not one and the same. And why you should assume a

more

more arbitrary Power of stating the Controversy than your Adversary, I do not understand. I may therefore full as fairly say, *the Controversy between us is truly and plainly no other than this, Whether Persons ordain'd to one and the same Office, under two different Names, by which 'tis signify'd, do on account of the bare difference of Names, become ordain'd to two different Offices.*

You next consider my 5th Proposition, which is this, *If the Scripture do's give to Presbyters the Power of Ordination, then all those who are rightly ordain'd to the Office of Presbyters, are to be look'd on, as having the Power of Ordination.*

Here you pretend to give me two parallel Arguments, to shew me the Fallaciousness of mine, the 1st, p. 30. thus. *If the Scripture do's give to Deacons the power of Ordination, then all those who are rightly Ordain'd to the Office of Deacons, are to be look'd on as having the Power of Ordination.* But this Argument is far from being Parallel to mine; for I plainly use the word Presbyters, as signifying such particular Officers. And therefore to your Argument I answer, If by Deacons in the Antecedent you mean Persons in that particular Office call'd Deacons, as 'tis taken in the Consequent, I then deny the Antecedent, and this I had taken Notice of in my first Letter, p. 52. But if by Deacons you there understand not Persons in that particular Office, I then deny the Consequence of your Argument. And withal, I deny that Presbyters when us'd to signify Officers in the Christian Church, is taken in a larger and a stricter Sense: and you'll do your Cause good Service if you can evince the contrary.

Your next parallel Instance is, *that if the Scripture gives to Disciples the Power of Ordination, then all those who are rightly (admitted or) ordain'd to be Disciples, have the Power of Ordination.* The same Answer serves. If Disciples are spoken of absolutely, and not as in Office; I deny the Antecedent, that the Scripture gives to Disciples the Power of Ordination. If Disciples are not spoken of Absolutely therein, but as in Office, then I deny the Consequence.

You alledge two Instances more of *Lay Presbyters and Aldermen*, and then ask me *what I now think of my 5th Proposition?* And truly Sir, I must own, I think better and better of it, the more weak and trifling I find your Objections are against it. Just as you confound two Senses of Deacons and Disciples in your former Parallels, you wou'd represent me, confounding different Senses of Presbyters in my Proposition; but 'tis obvious, I use Presbyters in the Antecedent and Consequent of that Proposition in the same Sense, and therefore I am sure the Consequence is just; and whereas you tell me, *I and my Brethren are not such Presbyters to whom the Scripture gives the Power of Ordination:* I tell you we are, and

and my Assertion is every whit as good in a dispute, as your Denial.

P. 32. You pretend to express my Argument thus; *If the Scripture do's give to Presbyters, so call'd in the New Testament, the Power of Ordination, then all those who are rightly Ordain'd to the Office of Presbyters, so call'd after the New Testament, are to be look'd on as having the Power of Ordination.* But truly Sir, tho I would not slight any Man's kindness, yet I must needs say, that the only trouble I have ever desired you to put your self to, on my account, is to answer my Arguments, and whenever you will condescend so far, as to do me that favour, I shall be heartily thankful, and will most easily excuse you the trouble of making and forming Arguments for me; and the rather because after all your Skill in Logick, I must profess I like them much better of my own than of your forming; but however, since you are pleas'd to be so over and above Civil to me in that respect, I will accept your kindness as far as ever I can, and therefore tho I can't much complement you for the Wit that appears in the Argument you have form'd for me, yet I offer to stand to the Argument, even so as you have form'd it, provided my other Assertion be joyn'd with it, that those call'd Presbyters in the New Testament, and those call'd Presbyters after the New Testament, are one and the same; and unless they are so, they are not rightly ordain'd to the Office of Presbyters at all. For there can be no Right in any Ordination to an Unscriptural Office in the Church. I now come to your Six Propositions, through mistake reckon'd seven, p. 33. I need say little to them, having answer'd them in Effect already. In your 3^d Proposition, (besides what I said to't before) *I deny that the word Presbyters* (as importing a sacred Office of Divine Appointment to which Persons are ordain'd) *ever signified properly such as had not the Power of Ordination:* It signify'd those that had it, and were by mistake only look'd on not to have it.

To your 4th Proposition I answer, by denying *that some Persons living in, and others living after the times of the New-Testament* (supposing them all rightly ordain'd according to Scripture-Rule) *may all of them have the same Name Presbyters,* (as signifying that particular standing Office of Rulers in the Church which is the only one Instituted by Christ) *and yet the former have, and the latter not have the Power of Ordination.*

Your Sixth Proposition I deny; because if they are not ordain'd to the same Scripture-Office, they are not *rightly Ordain'd*; And the same answer serves for your last, if the word RIGHTLY be put in the first line as it ought.

I now come to your other Propositions, p. 35. and shall take notice of such as concern my Cause.

I. I deny this Proposition, and say there were really but two Offices receiv'd in the Church, tho' thro' a mistake of the two Names of one Office, that one Office was split into two. The Offices were therefore really but two in their own Nature and Institution.

IV. I deny this Proposition, *that the Dissenters concern'd in this Controversy do deny those (you call) of the Middle Office to be in any sense Divinely appointed.* They deny these indeed to be of a Middle Office, and say they are of the highest; and they deny properly what you call the Superior Office, and say, that 'tis not Superior; and when they grant the Validity of Episcopal Ordinations, they do it not on the account of Bishops being of a Superior Order, but on the account of their being really plain Presbyters.

Give the Dissenters leave to know themselves what they deny, and put your Proposition fair, thus.

The Dissenters who are concern'd in this present Controversy do deny the Office call'd Superior, to be in any sense divinely appointed as Superior, or contradistinct to the middle. Thus we stand to it, and wait for the Refutation of our Opinion.

And so all your following Propositions down to the 21st inclusively, fall in course, as built on this.

22. If by Superior in this Proposition you mean Superior to Deacons, I grant it. If by Superior, you mean Superior to a Middle Office between themselves and Deacons I deny it, and say there is no such Office in the New-Testament.

23. This Proposition, I deny on Reasons alledg'd already, and so all your following Propositions fall in Course, and the hard Labour of the Mountains is over, and we see their Stupendous Offspring.

Your Recapitulation is as usual, Grave and Empty, and therefore not taken Notice of by me.

The Talent you refer to, which I allow'd you to be a great Master of, was that of *Shuffling, Winding and Turning things, and setting a specious and false Gloss on them*, and if you are pleas'd with it, I don't envy it you. I think a Man who writes Controversy, had need have a very different one. And if the Excellency of your Talent must be set off by the *ordering Money*, in my mind you wou'd have express'd it better by the Practice of those, who when they pay Money, and have any bad return'd, turn the bad side downward, and Shuffle it into a new heap, or give it a new wash to make it pass current, tho' it remain bad still.

All that remains to be considered is your Postscript, p. 45. I am freely willing to leave it with you to the *Impartial and Compunct Reader*, whether you are as yet come close to the
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Controversy. I granted you from the first your *Thesis*, as I have shown you. I only wish you had dealt as fairly with me in answering all my *Theses*, as I have with you in answering all yours.

When I desir'd you to give me occasion to write an Answer of a just size, I prescrib'd nothing to you of the bulk of yours, but only desir'd, I might not be put on Printing such small things as my 6th Letter was, which I should really have been asham'd to Print by it self, it was so small, but had then the advantage of another Letter to joyn with it, which I foresaw I should not in my next, having answer'd every thing you objected. And truly, Sir, I can't much fancy the Printing of Half Sheets, or very little more, as was my 6th Letter, and yet I'm loth to swell an Answer to a larger size, by needless Repetitions. And I think no one can reflect on my Letters for the largeness of the size of them, since I have in every Letter, not exceeded the bigness of what I answer'd, excepting my first Letter, as it was Printed in a large Letter in the first Edition, for in the second Edition 'tis brought within the compass of the Letter it answers. And I think when I have so much behind unanswer'd, I may very justly expect that you should take larger steps than you do in Answering me. And I'm willing to appeal to the Reader, whether I have given any sign of my at all mistrusting the goodness of my Cause, who have so freely answer'd every thing advanc'd against me hitherto, and have so much behind unanswer'd. And I still continue in the same Mind, that if you *do not come close to the Controversy*, and write at a better rate, I shall take leave of you; and the reason why I answer this, is not because of any great weight I can see in it; but partly, because you seem to have utter'd your Mind in it, concerning that which you have threatened us so long with; and partly, but especially, because of what I design to add in a Post-script, which I have wish'd for an Opportunity to Publish since I have known it.

I will not foul my Paper with your Expression concerning Mr. D, which I'm satisfy'd is like to move no Reader, unless it be with the Nastiness of it. I am not afraid to use any Expression because Mr. D. or any Man whatever has us'd it before, so it be Just and True, and one would think it should be very disagreeable to your learned Education, to think any Expression the worse on such an account. And I am apt to think, Persons acquainted with Mr. D's Character, will not think the worse of him, for the Contempt and Scorn you treat him with. I do not think the Matter worth Writing about, but it were not hard to defend him, and retort your Charges of little Oversights from several of your Considerable Writers; and I suppose you know, I could refer you to a whole Chapter of this Nature, which one

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Noted Doctor has written, concerning such slips in the Writings of another. In the next place I assure you, I care not *how particular, diligent, or thorough Enquiry is made into my Propositions*, for I am satisfy'd they are good, and I shall have thereby the more opportunity for Clearing and Confirming them. Nor do I care how large you are in answering them, for I doubt not I shall bring a full answer into a narrow Compass: But you do not use me as I have you, but keep People in suspence, when if you answer'd all, they would easily see on which side the strength of the Argument lay. And I did before, as I now do, urge you to answer all at once, because you seem to me, to act as tho' you design'd only to hicker and quarrel about the outside of the Controversy. And what ever you may think, I never met with any one, who thought you had sufficient Reason for your gradual and dilatory Proceeding.

You are offended at two or three of my Expressions, as *Arrogant and Assuming*, which were us'd by me only to excite you to write with more strength, judging it an Hardship to be put to answer Trifles: And when I attain that End, I shall scorn any Expression of that Nature. But you forget how *assuming and arrogant* the whole strain of your Writings against us is, not only in engrossing all *Logick and right Reason* to your self, and charging us with Ignorance and want of Logick, but especially taxing us, without any ground, *as led by Humour, Fancy, Perverseness and Interest*, and damning us as a parcel of Schismatics. And if any Man has a desire to see a Specimen of an assuming, arrogant way of Writing, I hardly know any one whose Writings I would sooner commend him to than your own, and especially your answer to Mr. D. You say, I intend *the Manner of Expression should go for strength of Argument*. But when your guesses have been already so often refuted, I should think you should be more sparing of them; and I assure you I had no such Intention at all, but merely design'd to provoke you, if it were possible, to write with strength of Argument. You add, that *'tis no wonder, since I find by what I have already Experienced, that 'tis but for me to say I've the Victory, and I shall not want some Persons so Weak, so Ignorant, so Bigotted to me, as to believe it true, without any more ado*. Really, Sir, I don't judge so much of the goodness of my Management, by the Reception my Letters have met with among all Dissenters, (except those of *Utopia* mention'd by you Numb. 1. pa. 21, and 22.) as by the plain Confession of many of your own side, and some of them very Considerable, for Learning and Judgment, who are so Candid and Generous as to acknowledge what they are really sorry for. The Reader must judge whose is a pretended and whose a real Victory; and what-

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ever boasts you make of your Logick, yet there is very little of it appears in your Writings, but a fly Sophistry runs thro' them, calculated not to inform, but to choke the Reader. And this I do not say of you, as tho' I thought you really wanted skill in Logick, for I really ascribe it to the unhappiness of your Argument, which will not bear a Logical Management, and so puts you on the Use of the poorest Shifts. And I assure you the Reception of your Writings in *England*, did no otherwise Nettle me, than as a Representation of *England*, as a Slavish, Barbarously Ignorant and Stupid Nation, would, if he found it believ'd abroad, nettle any English-Man. And I beseech you not to fear, that what you can say *is like to cast me into any Fever at all*. And as you are tender of my Health, I am of your Ease, and therefore with all earnestness and tenderness beseech you to be in no Pain for me, for I have never yet felt the least hurt or danger. And that your Writings, however slight they are, should meet with the like Reception in *Ireland* they have done in *England*, do's not surprize me; but I can assure you, they are like to meet with a very slender Reception in all those Chutches abroad, whose Ordinations your Theses pretend to nullify. And why should you talk of my *Cunning*, and not take Notice of your own of the same Nature, in the very Words which occasion'd my mentioning the Opinion of your Party in *Newbury*? Certainly your Expression of *other Dissenters*, Numb. 1. P. 21. do's no more inform the Reader whether they are Men or Women, than my Expression of *your Party*. Doubtless the Remembrance of your own *Cunning*, hinted to you that suspicion of mine. But I assure you what-ever your Design might be, I us'd no such *Cunning*. Nor did I refer to the most Injudicious. Nay I can't hear of one Person here that likes your Management; But I have it from some of your own Party, such as are Scholars and Clergy-Men, no way Inferior to your self, that I have fully answer'd you, whose Expressions concerning you were such as I will not repeat, *lest I should quite throw you into the worst sort of Malignant Fevers*; and I hope I have been the Means of convincing a great many of your own Brethren, that the Reception your Writings met with at first was utterly unreasonable. I could, if I thought fit, give you good reasons for my believing this. I'll only give you one Hint, which perhaps may do you a Kindness. You know we live in a busy Age, and there is a great deal of Curiosity abroad in the World, in enquiring into the Reasons of things, and in Men's spending their Judgments on them. And I find many People are much concern'd to know the Reason, why this last Learned Peice of yours should appear without that Honourable *Imprimatur* which us'd to grace your Writings. They say
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it can't be thought, that this can be owing to a want of seeking it now as well as formerly, nor to any Partiality to me or my Cause, or want of Kindness to you or your Cause, in them that refus'd it; and therefore they suggest some Reasons, which I suppose you would not like; and I profess seriously to you, the little Logick I have will not enable me to refute them. I have therefore thought it proper to have recourse to you, as a great Master in that Art, for a little Direction in this Affair, and if you can furnish me with a good Answer to them, you shall find I'll act the Part of an Honourable Adversary. And now, Sir, I assure you that I am still of the same Mind I was in my last, in taking leave of you, and when I have so many things behind unanswer'd, (*viz.* two parts in three of the last half of my first Letter, all my second, third, and fifth, and the greatest Part of my fourth Letter, not to mention all that related to your Post-script in my sixth) no one will think it dishonourable if I neglect a Trifle or two, and wait till your Numbers are so increas'd, as to give me a just occasion to publish an Answer. And tho' I have taken so much notice in this Letter of your *pretended Ambiguity of the Word Presbyters*, yet I shall think it below me to make a long Strife, about the Conceptions which Men might design to Express by it, and therefore if you resolve to make a farther Contest about the Matter, I shall content my self in all probability with what I have said, as a full and clear Account of the Matter, and leave you to swell with a mighty Conceit of your Logick, and shall be very easy as to the Judgments of all those who have any Skill in the Rules of Disputations. And so earnestly desiring your Welfare, I recommend you again to the Divine Blessing, and Remain,

Honoured Doctor,

Your most Affectionate and

Faithful Servant in Christ,

James Peirce.

Newbury, April the 30th, 1707.

Post-script.

Post-script.

THE Design of this Post-script is to Correct a Mistake I have made, which, tho' it is not probable would ever be discover'd to the World otherwise, yet the Regard I have to Truth will not suffer me to Conceal. In my first Letter, P. 15. I have in relating a Story of an Irish Bishop, said in the Conclusion, that *in the Family where he then was, he us'd conceiv'd Prayer.* And I since understand, I mistook my Friend's Expression. And as I am sorry and beg Pardon for this Mistake, so I hope my voluntary Correcting it, will satisfy all Men, that it was far from being wilfully Committed at first, and that I have an Inviolable Regard to Truth, and shall be always open, to the receiving and owning it.

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F I N I S.

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An Eighth LETTER
TO
Dr. *WELLS*:
BEING
A Continuation
OF THE
DEFENCE
OF THE
REMARKS
ON HIS
LETTERS.

In Answer to his Numb. III.

By *JAMES PEIRCE*.

L O N D O N,

Printed by *J. Humfreys*, for *John Lawrence*,
at the Angel in the *Poultry*. 1707.

An Eighth LETTER

TO

Dr. WELLS

BEING

A Continuation



OF THE

DEFEIN

OF THE

REMARKS

ON HIS

LETTERS

In Answer to his Letter of the 10th of March 1783.

By J. WELLS, B. A.

LONDON

Printed by J. WELLS, at the Theatre Royal, in Pall Mall.

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*A Continuation of the Defence of the Remarks
on Dr. Wells's Letters.*

Honoured Doctor;

I Shall now consider what you say in your Number III. which I have lately received. I do not well understand what you mean by your Parenthesis concerning my 7th Letter, that *'tis come forth at last.*

'Tis are pleas'd in your Examination (Part the 2d. p. 16.) to allow me a Month, or two Months, to answer in. And therefore, I should think, when I keep within your own Allowance, you need not complain. Now your Numb. II. is dated, *March the 8th*, my 7th Letter *April the 30th*, and your Numb. III. *June the 7th*. I cannot imagine what Occasion you could have of mentioning again the Business of *Lay-Elders*, unless it were to gratify an Inclination of multiplying Words. 'Tis neither mine nor any Man's giving that matter up, but Arguments that must convince the Dissenters, who are of that Opinion. And as this *does not destroy any Objection* of those who have no such Officers, so neither *do's it destroy the Objection* of those who have them; for they retain them as of divine, and not humane Institution. And when you or I can shew them they are in the wrong, they will set you an Example what should be done with such Officers.

I doubt not but impartial Persons will judge, *I think as freely of Teaching Elders, as of Lay-Elders*: or at least, I am well assur'd, no Person of Candour and Judgment will question my *thinking freely*, on the account of my not being moved by any Arguments you have been pleas'd as yet to bring.

Next you say, *What I alledge in Defence of my Assertion, that your first Thesis do's not affect the Controversy, in the Upshot amounts only to this, that by not affecting, I meant, it did not decide or determine the Controversy, one way more than the other: Which you should never have excepted against, had I express'd my Meaning more properly or particularly.*

I think nothing is more proper than to say, a Controversy is not affected by such a Proposition as leaves it just as it was, and which serves not at all to decide and determine it. And that

that this was my meaning has been all along plain. The Reason I gave at first, why it did not affect the Controversy was in these Words: *Lett. 4. p. 71.* 'For the Controversy, being
 ' whether Presbyters have valid Authority to ordain as well as
 ' Bishops; if it appear they have, Presbyterian Ordination
 ' will be safe and valid, tho this Proposition be granted. Was
 not this sufficiently expressive of my Meaning?

Or what can be more plain than those Words in my sixth Letter, *p. 27.* where I say, 'Our Controversy is whether
 ' Presbyterian Ordination be valid: And this can be only af-
 ' fected by a Proposition which serves to determine it; as this
 ' do's not. So that every one must see your present Pretence
 is a very pitiful and sorry shift, and that I had properly and
 particularly enough express'd my meaning from the beginning,
 and was all along consistent in it.

You tell me, *that you must observe to me, that whosoever should
 tell another, that the Possibility and Existence of Motion do's not
 affect the Controversy concerning the moving of the Sun or Earth,
 would be guilty of a great Absurdity.* In the Controversy, whe-
 ther the Earth or Sun move, on both sides Motion is suppos'd,
 and therefore I think it would be no Absurdity at all to say
 those things do not affect the Controversy. You say, 'Tis true
 indeed one might be apt to laugh at another, that should begin
 with laying down the Propositions I mention, but then it would
 not be because they do not affect the Controversy, but because they
 affect it so apparently, and are so apparently true in themselves,
 that 'tis absurd to think any one would question them; which
 makes my Instance far from parallel to your Case.

But with your good leave, Sir, the Instance is very paral-
 lel, because 'tis as absurd in you to think that I, with whom
 you were managing this Controversy, would make any Que-
 stion of that Proposition, and the Reason why 'tis as absurd
 in you is this, because I had from the very first granted it:
 as you may see by my first Letter, *p. 43.* 'And we not only
 ' implicitly, but expressly grant his main Point, as he calls
 ' it, that none can lawfully ordain (i am not concern'd in
 ' Cases of utmost Necessity) except those that are invested
 ' with the Power of Ordination.

And now, Sir, since you grant, *that your first Proposition
 do's not decide or determine the Controversy one way more than
 the other,* how comes it to serve as a Link in your Chain? Is
 not your Bucket suppos'd to be the grand Proposition you
 contend for? and since this will not help to the establishing
 that, any more than the directly opposite or contradictory
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Proposition of your Adversary, I should think this Link was superfluous, and your first Proposition and last Conclusion must have no better Connection than a Rope of Sand, and so your Chain will not serve to draw up even an empty Bucket.

To tell you the truth, I despise *Wit*, when 'tis made use of in the place of *Argument*, and I do not see you have any great Reason to charge me with want of *Argument*, when there has been occasion for it. But I could not see there was any need of *Argument* to answer that, which had nothing in it besides its being solemn and dogmatical. And I shall take the liberty of despising that which is silly when-ever I meet with it in your Writings. However gravely it may be laid down; I profess to you I cannot by your *Numb. II. p. 8, 10, 11, 12.* find what is the Difference between a Respondent's granting a Proposition, and his answering all that his Opponent says, on Supposition of the Truth of it. And in spite of the Assurance you write with, I defy you to shew that I ever am guilty of making no *Distinction where there is a real Difference*; and 'tis a shrewd Evidence that the Difference pretended by you is Chymærical and Imaginary, since I can't prevail with you so much as to give me the Foundations of it.

You had charg'd me with a double *Inconsistency or Contradiction*. The first was this, that whereas I granted you your first Thesis, *that the Validity of any Ordination do's immediately depend on the valid Authority of the Ordainer*; I did in my Answer to your second and third Theses, say it depends immediately on another thing; I told you, those two things I mention'd were the very things wherein the valid Authority of the Ordainer lies; and that is plainly true from my Words, which were these: 'The Validity of Presbyterian Ordination, according to our present Hypothesis (*that is your first Proposition*) depends on, (1) The Validity of the Ordination of those Presbyters, (who did ordain) to the Office of Presbyters. (2) The Validity of Presbyterian Ordination, supposing the Ordainers rightly ordain'd themselves, depends immediately on the Power annex'd by Divine Appointment to the Office of Presbyters. And can any Man doubt that the valid Authority of the Ordainers lies in these two things? And are you not put on a gross Absurdity to defend your Charge, when you tell me, my Answer should have run thus, *The Validity of Presbyterian Ordination, according to our present Hypothesis, depends on two things, viz. First and immediately on the Validity of the Ordainers. Secondly, And supposing the Ordainers rightly ordain'd themselves, it depends on the Power annex'd*

annex'd by Divine Appointment to the Office of Presbyters? For where's the Contradiction all this while? In short, Sir, this is a plain Blunder of yours, notwithstanding all your Skill in Logick; for you did not perceive what is yet plain enough, that in those two things the valid Authority of the Ordainers lies: For as to the Word Immediately, tho' that be not express'd, yet 'tis sufficiently implied by my referring to your first Proposition. And therefore your first Charge ran thus, that the Validity of Presbyterian Ordination is asserted in your first Thesis to depend IMMEDIATELY on one thing, and in my Answer to the Second and Third Thesis, to depend IMMEDIATELY on another thing; Numb. II. p. 17. So that you could not but see then, I design'd and intended an immediate Dependance, tho' now you would fain not see it. Besides, the same thing is evident from the second Answer; for if that supposes the first, there must be such an immediate Dependance on the first. So that I must here resume my former Words: Here is not so much as the least Shadow of a Contradiction.

Your Second pretended Contradiction was, That in my second Answer before recited, I say, *the Validity of Presbyterian Ordination depends immediately on the Power annexed by Divine Appointment to the Office of Presbyters; and yet at the same time assert, there can't be that immediate Dependance, without supposing the Ordainers rightly ordain'd themselves.*

This I fully clear'd in a few Words, giving you the plain Sense of the Proposition, with a little Alteration of the Words, thus; 'The Validity of Presbyterian Ordination, perform'd by validly and rightfully ordain'd Presbyters, depends immediately on the Power annex'd by divine Appointment to the Office of Presbyters. This you take no notice of, but wonder why I should ask you what here mediates or comes between? And I am much amaz'd at you, that you can't see nothing does here mediate, or come between. Pray, Sir, let me know, what there is that comes between the Ordination of validly and rightfully ordain'd Presbyters, and the Power annex'd by Divine Appointment to the Office of Presbyters, on which the Validity of the said Ordination does more nearly depend? Or what is the immediate Cause of the Validity of an Ordination, so specify'd as above? I will put a parallel Instance. Suppose a Settlement is made of Lands upon *A*. his Son. If it be ask'd, on what does *B*. his Right to the Lands immediately depend? It may well be answer'd on his being the Son of *A*. But if it be ask'd on what does

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does *A.* his Son's Right immediately depend? The proper Answer is on the Settlement it self. This I think all will grant to be a proper and logical way of speaking, and such as none ever found an Inconsistency or Contradiction in before your self. I alledg'd that you us'd the Word *Immediately*, just in that Sense you blame in me, and so any one would think must be equally chargeable with an *Inconsistency* or *Contradiction*. But 'twas prudently done of you to take no Notice of it. I am freely willing you should take Notice of *Contradictions* and *Inconsistencies*, when you meet with them. But to form Charges of *Contradictions*, without any tolerable Colour for them, is a Reflection on a Man's own Judgment as well as his Temper; and is injurious to the World, while it necessitates an Adversary to multiply Words in his own Defence, in a Matter in which the World is little concern'd.

I had said, 'That all the Consequence of your Argument is only this, That as the Scriptures do not tell us, who by Name should be Officers in After-Ages; so we are to learn this by comparing Persons Pretensions with the Scripture Rule. You say, p. 9. *Very well, and this Consequence is enough for my Purpose: For on comparing Persons Pretensions with the Scripture Rule, it appears, that Calvin, &c. (why you should so expressly omit Luther, I can't imagine, who was a bare Presbyter, and yet took upon him to ordain) tho' call'd by the like Name of Presbyters, as Peter and John, &c. are sometimes call'd in the New Testament, yet they were far from having the same Ministerial Power of Ordination as they had. And the plain Reason is this, because tho' the Word Presbyters was sometimes in the New Testament apply'd to such as had the Power of Ordination, yet in After-Ages, down to the Reformation, it was us'd to denote properly such as had not the Power of Ordination.* 'Tis only in the Reason you alledge that I am concern'd, and therein I deny two Things; (1.) That the Word *Presbyters*, when it signifies Officers in the Christian Church, is only Sometimes in the *New Testament*, applied to such as had the Power of Ordination. For I say 'tis never applied to any Other. And you have not yet pretended to alledge any Scripture-Evidence against me on this Head. (2.) I deny that the Word *Presbyters* was in *After-Ages*, down to the Reformation, us'd to denote properly such as had not the Power of Ordination. I say, in all *After-Ages*, it was us'd to denote properly such as had that Power; but who, by Mistake, were thought not to have it. These things I am forc'd here to repeat, you still insisting (without Proof) on what I have

have so often deny'd, and call'd on you to prove. And from my Assertion it more plainly follows, that they are the same with those call'd Presbyters in the New Testament, than from yours, that they are not.

Your Answer to my Question is very insufficient: For it matters not what Distinctions After-Ages have coin'd. If modern Presbyters are not the same for Kind, with those call'd Presbyters in the New Testament, they can't be requir'd in the Scripture to perform any of the Offices of Presbyters: Nor do the Texts that speak to Presbyters relate to them. If therefore Modern Presbyters are in those Texts, I mention'd, requir'd to do any Duties, I say, it must be because they are the same with Scripture-Presbyters.

My Third Proposition comes next again under Consideration: 'Tis this; 'Tis only by the Scriptures we are to judge what Offices are of Divine Appointment, what Powers do respectively belong to them, and when they are regularly convey'd. You alledge primitive Practice as a *Secondary Rule*, and approve of what I say, with Reference thereto. Now one would think, since we so well agree about the Rule we are to judge by, we should soon bring this Controversy to an Issue. For as I never allow the Secondary Rule any Place where it differs from the Primary One, either contradicting it, or vouching for any thing not found in it; so 'tis but for you to produce some clear Scripture-Arguments for your Opinion, which then you may confirm, as you please, by your Secondary Rule, or else you may omit that Confirmation, for the primary Rule alone will satisfy me; but without that nothing will.

This I have earnestly call'd for, but to no purpose, and therefore think my self hardly used.

I gave you so plain a Reason, why *I was at a loss to know when I am to follow your Secondary Rule*, that I shall refer the Reader to it, Letter 7. p.8. and leave him to judge, whether it does not appear that you are as much at a Loss as my self. And if you lay any more Stress on primitive Practice than I do, I shall not esteem a solid Reason for it, any ways *inconsistent with your keeping close to the Controversy*. For in my Mind this is a Preliminary highly requisite to be adjust'd, and therefore I thought that Proposition necessary. I could have alledg'd several more such Instances as that I gave, but I find one was more than enough for you; and to be plain with you, I have long observ'd, that the Talk of *Primitive Practice* is ordinarily an empty Sound, there be-

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being few who less conform to it, than those who talk most of it.

I had said (in answer to your Charge) that ' I never argue from the bare Sameness of Names, but from Persons being rightly ordain'd to the Office of Presbyters, &c. You reply, *That I may know that one principal Cause of false arguing is Indistinction.* I confess, I am much indebted to you, that you will give me so much Instruction about arguing. Rest secure, I beseech you, Sir, you shall not meet with any such thing in me : I'll lay up your Instructions against I have need of them ; at present they are of no Use, but to give Vent to your own Disposition of solemnly Dictating. If I argue falsely for want of distinguishing, do you distinguish, and tell in what Sense you grant, and in what you deny. This is your Province, and you may easily judge what Name I think this frequent Haranguing, in a Dispute, deserves. But now I not only said, but prov'd too, that I did not argue from a bare Sameness of Names ; for I told you, I argu'd from your being rightly ordain'd to the Office of Presbyters. But you say, *this is to argue from the bare Sameness of Names, unless I do duly and rightly distinguish between the different Acceptations, wherein the Office of Presbyters has been taken.* I answer, I do as duly and rightly distinguish as the Thing requires. I added, ' That the Office of Presbyters, to which any one can be rightly ordain'd, can be no other than the Scripture-Office of Presbyters, because no one can be rightly ordain'd to any Office but a Scripture one. And I hope this is not arguing from the bare Sameness of Names. You pretend to overthrow this by putting a Supposition, that the Name Presbyters were apply'd in after-Ages, to signify the Office of Deacons. I answer, this signifies nothing to me. My Argument is, if they are rightly ordain'd, it must be to a Scripture-Office, and since there are but two Scripture-Offices, Presbyters and Deacons ; and 'tis not to that of Deacons, it must be to that of Presbyters. Let the Reader look to the place, Letter 7. p. 9. I asserted too, that Presbyters had all along signify'd the Scripture-Office of Presbyters. So that this Instance is of no Use.

In your 13th Page, you take it for granted, *that Presbyters in Scripture, signifies two sort of Officers ;* I humbly beseech you to prove it.

I go on to p. 14. where you say, *Hence, Sir, you may perceive, that there is no need to try to bring my Notions, and the Scriptures together, since the former are founded on the latter.*

Good Sir, whence may I perceive this? From the Texts you cite out of the Scripture? I profess, I can't meet with one, from the Beginning to the End of your Piece, tho' I have beg'd for some, as for an Alms. I can't tell whence I am to perceive this, except it be hence, that you say the Scripture makes the same Distinctions you do. To speak plain, I perceive nothing, but that the more you are urg'd, the more shy you are of that Touch-stone, which shews to me, that you shrewdly suspect your Coin is not Standard.

You were pleas'd so much to urge the Sense, in which the Word Presbyters was us'd in after-Ages, particularly at the Reformation, as signifying Persons that had not the Power of Ordination, that I thought I might gratify you with some Observations relating thereto. And therefore, I told you,

- That the Holy Scriptures, as a Revelation from God, are
- the best Rule for our speaking, as well as judging of Things;
- and such has been the Deference which Christians have ordinarily paid to them, that where the Scriptures have fix'd
- a religious Sense on a Term, they have in using that
- Term in religious Matters, design'd to express that Sense.
- Unscriptural Terms admit of a greater Variation, as the
- Word Sacrament, &c. But tho' scriptural Terms have
- been mis-understood, yet I think the Design of those that
- us'd them, was to use them in that Sense, they thought
- the Scriptures did also. This, I think, ought to have
- been disprov'd, and some clear Evidence brought, that they
- design'd by the Word Presbyters, to express a Sense, which
- they knew to be unscriptural, or else all the Noise of the
- pretended Ambiguity falls to the Ground; and it then must
- follow, that the Word Presbyters signify'd the same thing,
- really and truly, in after-Ages, that it did in the New Testament, and consequently, that 'tis by the New Testament,
- and not by the imperfect Notions of after-Ages, we are to
- judge of the State of the Office. Now to prove this, I al-
- ledg'd the Testimony of such as were formerly for the I-
- dentity of Bishops and Presbyters, and such as were against
- it: Then I consider'd the State of the Office at the Reforma-
- tion, according to the Papists Notions of it, and then the
- Opinion of the Reform'd Church of *England*.

First, I alledg'd such as were for the Identity of Bishops and Presbyters, using these Words: 'The Arguments us'd

- by *Jerom* and others, to prove that Presbyters are the same
- with Bishops, shew that they understood by Presbyters, no
- other than those of the Scripture. This I think is very

clear,

clear, for if he had thought there was such an Ambiguity in the Word Presbyters, he would never have us'd those very Arguments we do, to shew that Bishops and Presbyters are one and the same. Nay, had he not known, that others design'd to use Bishops and Presbyters, in a Scripture-Sense, such Arguments had never been us'd by him, for he would have seen that they carry'd no Evidence in them. To this, which is the true Sense of my Argument, you return no Answer at all. But you say, *If St. Jerom understood by Presbyters no other than those of the Scripture, in my Sense, that is, such as had the Power of ordaining, you would fain know how I'll reconcile thereto two Expressions of his.* I answer, (I should think according to your Heart's desire) He understood by Presbyters, *those of his own Time*, as is plain by the Occasion of the Epistle, wherein he vindicates the Superiority of Presbyters, in his Time, to Deacons, and does it by this; that Presbyters were the same with Bishops, and so alledges all the Texts we do. Good Man! He had not the Happiness to live in an Age, wherein he might be instructed in the Ambiguity of the Word Presbyters. And as to those Expressions themselves, St. Jerom did not at all refer in them to any Divine Right, but only to the Practice of his own Time; and I desire you to make him speak Sense otherwise in that Epistle. I shall therefore here conclude with the Words of Bishop Crofts's naked Truth, p. 45. 'And now I desire my Reader, if he understand *Latin*, to view the Epistle of St. Hierom to Evagrius, and doubtless he will wonder to see Men have the Confidence, to quote any thing out of it, for the Distinction between Episcopacy and Presbytery, for the whole Epistle is to shew the Identity of them.

In the next Place, I alledg'd the Testimony of *Epiphanius*, (who was against the Identity of Bishops and Presbyters) only to shew that he understood the Presbyters of his Time, to be so call'd in a Scripture-Sense. These were my Words, 'In like manner, the Arguments us'd by *Epiphanius*, to refute *Aerius*, shew, that he thought the Presbyters of his Time, the same with Scripture-Presbyters. Now who would doubt, who was meant by the HE in that Place? But you are pleas'd thus to gloss on it. *I suppose you mean Aerius, tho' 'tis worded so as to trick any unwary Reader.* No Men are more ready to suspect others of *Trick and Cunning*, than those that are most giv'n to it themselves.

You have all along found me plain and downright, and have never been able to fasten any Charge on me to the contrary: Why should you go on to suspect me? And especially when you pass over the like Accusations against your self.

I thought I need not quote *Epiphanius's Arguments*, to shew the *Opinion of Acrius*. For if I had appeal'd to *Acrius*, his Opinion is known well enough from the bare Relation *Epiphanius* gives of it, before he comes to use Arguments to confute it. In short, those Arguments shew, *Epiphanius* thought that Bishop and Presbyter in the Stile of the Scripture, without any manner of ambiguous or promiscuous Use, constantly signify'd those very Offices that were call'd by those Names in his own Time. I suppose, I need not set down his Arguments: I dare say, you would have denied what I asserted, if the Thing would have born it. For I will not be so rude, as to suppose you are not well acquainted with his Arguments. And therefore I ascribe this awkward Turn, you have given my Words, to the civil Design you had of mis-representing me, in Order to your more decent Insulting and Triumphing over me in the next Words, which are these: *Well, and what if he [Acrius] did think so? Was he not for thinking so censur'd and condemn'd by the whole Catholick Church, as one that entertain'd Doctrines repugnant to the Scripture? Would it not therefore have become Mr. P— to have been asham'd of using the Authority of such an one? See what sad Shifts a bad Cause will put a Man to.* I think a Man need not have clearer Evidence, *what sad Shifts a bad Cause will put a Man to*, than your Usage of me in this Place. I must needs say, you do not want for Assurance, and so cunningly do you use it, that you seem to reserve it for a Cover to your greatest Weaknesses. What Reader would think, when a Learned Doctor talks at this Rate, it should contain nothing at all, but his own most gross Mistake, or most wilful Misrepresentation?

But however, since *Acrius* was an Asserter of the Opinion I plead for, and you have, with so much Importunity, dragg'd him into our Company, I think it will be but decent in me, to take a little Notice of him. That *Acrius* was an Heretick, I grant, for he was an *Arrian*: But that all *Epiphanius* pretends to refute in *Acrius* was Heresie, I will not say; nor do I think you will, on mature Consideration. *Acrius* the *Arrian*, I detest as an Heretick; but as an Asserter of the Truth concerning the Identity of Bishops and Presby-

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ters, and an Enemy to the gross Superstition of his Time (such as that of the Living's praying for the Dead) I respect him, and must needs say, that a Man must have a strange Genius, who can think that *Epiphanius* talks anything to the Purpose against him on those Heads. And I would fain know when? Or in what Oecumenical Council? Or by what other Acts of the Catholick Church, *Aerius* was censur'd and condemn'd for his Opinion of the Identity of Bishops and Presbyters? Is there any thing of this Nature in *Epiphanius*, or *Augustine*; who, I believe, of the Ancient Writers, are the only Two that mention him? Does *Epiphanius's* putting him in the List of Hereticks prove this? Or if it does, is there any Evidence that he was, on this Account, condemn'd, and censur'd, any more than on the Account of his being against Prayers for the Dead? Or if poor *Aerius* must be look'd on, as on this single Account, censur'd and condemn'd, and no Notice to be taken of his other Opinions, for the serving your *Hypothesis*, pray what must become of *Epiphanius's* good Friend, *St. Hierom*? Was it not hard, that when *Aerius*, and *St. Jerom*, were both for the Identity of Bishops and Presbyters, *Aerius* on this Account must pass for an Heretic; and *St. Jerom* be reckon'd at the same time, a Saint, and a Father of the Church. But you go on, *And the same* (viz. what sad Shifts, a bad Cause will put a Man to) *appears still clearer from what follows in your Letter*. The Reader may, from the Warning I gave him before, guess what is coming; here's an ugly scurvy Passage at hand, which the Doctor not knowing what to make of, sprinkles here a Grain or two of Assurance, to make a slight Answer go off the better. And he does the same thing again, after he had set down the Passage. The Case is this: You propose this as *The Question you are concern'd about, whether Presbyters, at the Time of the Reformation, had the Power of Ordination?* — and tell us; *In short, the main Stress of the Controversy we are concern'd in, lies upon the Use, or Signification of the Name Presbyters, at the time of the Reformation*. And this we have been dunn'd with, over and over, in your Letters. I told you therefore, 'That the Papists themselves understand by Presbyters, those of the same Order with Scripture-Presbyters. For as they hold seven Orders, they make the highest of them, to comprehend both Bishops and Presbyters, as but of one Order. And therefore, if we are to fetch our Notions from them, 'tis certain, that Presbyters were of that Order, that had the Pow-

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er of Ordination. I know that they plead for a Superiority of Bishops in the same Order: But then the Question comes to this Issue, according to their Writings, whether in this one Order God has made such a Distinction, that one sort shall have the Power of Ordination, and the other not. For if he has not, then we may infer, even from their own Opinion, that by Original Right, Presbyters have the Power of Ordination. So that by the Writings of those at the Reformation, Presbyters was a Name that signify'd those of the highest Order of Officers in Christ's Church. And therefore, if to the highest Order, without Distinction, the Power of Ordination did belong, by Divine Right, it must thence follow, that their denying them the Power, was only their Mistake of the Nature of the Office. You tell me, *This is a New Sign of the extream Badness of my Cause, that I am thus forced to have Recourse to the rankest sort of Popery for its Defence, viz. the Opinions broach'd and maintain'd only by the more immediate Creatures of the Popes, in favour of the Papacy, but oppos'd and deny'd by the more Judicious and Learned, even among the Papists themselves.*

Can any thing be more ridiculous than this? For, (1.) If it be any Argument of a bad Cause, to have Recourse to the Papists, 'tis plain your Cause must be bad, who have Recourse to the Papists, and will needs put the Controversy on the Sense of the Word Presbyters, at the Reformation, that is really the Sense in which the Papists then used it. (2.) When you have thus stated the Controversy, no Man of the most ordinary Capacity can blame me, for going about to shew what was the Sense of the Word among the Papists, at the Reformation. What is it, I beseech you, you expect of me? Would you have me go purely on the Scriptures? I have offer'd it over and over, and do now again intreat you, to let me have somewhat produc'd thence by you. Would you have me state the Notion of Presbyters by the succeeding Ages? I have brought Evidence to prove that they used the Word, with a Design of Expressing a scriptural Sense. And you have not brought the least Syllable of Evidence to the contrary; nor attempted to answer my Arguments in the plain and obvious Sense of them. If I could but tell what were like to please you, it were somewhat.— But, (3.) you say that their Opinion that Bishops and Presbyters were of the same Order, is the *rankest sort of Popery*. And no doubt your Reason is, because 'tis contrary to your own

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own Opinion. But I say 'tis no sort of Popery, but a great Truth. (4.) I desire of you to know who those *learned and judicious Persons among the Papists* are, that oppose and deny their being of the same Order? Pray, Sir, inform me next time how those learned and judicious Persons reckon the seven Orders? and whether they don't make the 7th Order to be that of Priesthood? *Tertius omniumque sacrorum Ordinum summus est sacerdotium.* *Catech. ad Paroch.* Part the 2d. p. 281. and therefore it distinguishes afterward the Degrees of this Order, Priests, Bishops, Arch-Bishops, Patriarchs, the Pope.

You may consult *Bellarmino de Clericis, lib. 1. c. 13, 14. p. m. 325.*

You say, *After all I grant, that the Papists at the Reformation deny'd Presbyters at the Reformation to have the Power of Ordination, which is agreeable to your Assertions.*

Well, is it not hard that you must have the Liberty of arguing from the Papists, and I must not so much as have the Liberty of answering you from them? What if I do grant this, yet if I say as I do say, and prove it too, that they deny them this Power not consistently with their own Doctrine of their being of the same Order with Bishops; and since the Scripture makes no such Distinction as they do, can it yield your Cause any Assistance? In short, I am well pleas'd the Reader should see the Inconsistencies of those Gentlemen, for by that means I think he must be convinc'd, it is a very ridiculous way you propose to determine this Controversy.

I appeal'd to Bishop *Burnet* concerning the common *Stile* of the Age at the Reformation, who tells us it was to reckon *Bishops and Presbyters as the same Office.* Now this is the very thing you make such a Noise about, and I think all will grant his Lordship to be a great Historian, and a competent Judge in these Matters. But if you have any thing to say, to invalidate his Assertion, you may produce it, and the Matter shall not rest on his Authority. Now if this was the common *Stile of the Age*, what becomes of your pretended *Ambiguity* of the word *Presbyters*? It concerns not me whence this Opinion sprung, or what Name you will give it; If it be the *Dregs of Popery*, 'tis all one as to the matter I produc'd it for, tho I deny that 'tis or can be so call'd with any Reason, for 'tis a great Truth, against which you have indeed little to say.

I next took notice of the Sense of the Reform'd Church of England. I think, what I have cited and refer'd to, is a full Evidence of the Sense of the Generality of the Churches Writers; and I shall not regard what you tell us *you are ready to make*

make out till I see it. And I told you, as to the *Preface to the publick Form of Ordination*, ' That the State of Subscription ' was not always the same. And how far the subscribing to that Preface might be urg'd at that time, I can't say; but certainly the refering to their Opinion subscrib'd with their own Hands, should be sufficient Evidence.

I had said, ' I thought it certain that the Old Church of ' *England* did by Presbyters understand such as are call'd Presbyters in the Scripture, and alledg'd this Evidence of it, ' that in the old Form of Ordination, the Epistle appointed ' to be read when Presbyters were ordain'd, was taken out of ' the 20th of the *Acts*. This, I observ'd, was afterwards ' translated to the Consecration of Bishops, where it now ' stands. The plain Consequence of which is this, that the ' Church of later times has thought Bishops were the Scripture-Presbyters, but that of former times thought Presbyters were. Now this you do not deny, but you answer thus; *Well, and how do's this Consequence affect the Three-fold Order? The Presbyters mention'd Acts the 20th, may be understood either of our Bishops, or Presbyters, (for there is nothing said which will necessarily restrain them to either) and therefore the Church is at liberty to apply that Portion of Scripture to either, as she pleases.* I answer, (1.) This Argument fully proves what I chiefly brought it for, viz. that the Church of *England* did by Presbyters understand no other than Scripture-Presbyters. (2.) You greatly mistake, when you say, here is nothing to restrain those Presbyters mention'd there, either to Bishops or Presbyters. For they were the Presbyters of one Church, viz. *Ephesus*, and consequently they can't signify such as our modern Bishops are, because there is but one such in a Church. And hence it will follow, that the Episcopal Scheme is contrary to that place of Scripture, and that the Power of Government (with which goes that of Ordination) belongs to a Plurality of Presbyters, since the Apostle lodges the Government of the Church of *Ephesus* in them. You add, *Besides, Sir, I must put you in mind, that you do not understand me aright, if you think that by this Expression at the Reformation, I ever intended to mean or include the time after the Doctrine of Presbytery began to be started or receiv'd.* 'Tis evident from my *Writings*, that what I appeal to for determining the Signification of the word Presbyters, is the constant Doctrine of the Church from the first Ages after the New Testament down to that time, when the Reformation began. After the Notion of Presbytery was once started, then Men became strangely divided in their Sentiments,

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not only from others, but frequently from themselves, consider'd at several times; this being no other than the usual Consequence, that attends the first broaching of new Opinions. In answer to which I say, (1.) That there is more Reason for me to consider the time after the Reformation, than for you to consider that at the Reformation. The ground of your pretending to consider the time at the Reformation, is what you give us, *Letter to Mr. D. p. 21. The Controversy, as it stands between us and you, was occasion'd at the time of the Reformation from Popery, by some who were then call'd Presbyters, who took on them to give Ordination to others.* Now I think 'tis very certain, that tho the Controversy between you and the Reform'd Churches abroad was occasion'd then, yet the Controversy between us and you was not occasion'd till some time after. For Presbyters in *England* did not begin to ordain, that I know of, till a considerable time after the Reformation, and therefore 'tis very just, that I should consider the Time after the Reformation. (2.) If we are not to consider the time after the Reformation, by a Parity of Reason, we are not to consider the time after the New Testament. If the Change of Men's Opinions is a Reason against one, it may as well be so against the other. And therefore we must then come to the Scriptures according to my earnest Desire. (3.) If we are not to come down to the time after the Reformation, because then the Notion of Presbytery was first started and receiv'd, then we must not come down so far as the time of the Reformation, because 'tis certain, that the Opinion of Presbytery began to be started and received long before, and therefore I will here give you the Judgment of *Bishop Stillingfleet, Iren. p. 276.* 'I believe on the strictest Enquiry, *Medina's* Judgment will prove true, that *Jerom, Austin, Ambrose, Sedulius, Chrysostom, Theodoret, Theophylact,* were all of *Aerius's* Judgment, as to the Identity of both Name and Order of Bishops and Presbyters in the Primitive Church.

You are pleas'd, *p. 18.* to use these words; *Sir, you have been often told, that the word Presbyters is apply'd in Scripture to two distinct sort of Officers, which therefore may be distinguished into Presbyters of the superior Order, and Presbyters of the inferior Order. The former are (in short) our Bishops, the latter our Presbyters.*

I confess I have been told this often, as you say, but since you see, that *telling* do's so very little good upon me, I would by all means advise you now to take another Course with me, and instead of that mild and gentle way, come now to down-
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right Argument to prove it. For I am of a mighty suspicious Temper, and am much afraid you have told me wrong. For shame leave off this haughty way of Dictating, and dispute like a Man that do's not expect his Adversary should take his bare Word. And if that will engage you to it, I do now defy and challenge you to prove, *that the word Presbyters is apply'd as you say in the Scriptures.* Prove that and I'll give you the Cause: and I think that's a fair Offer, and may save you and me a great deal of Labour.

There is but one Passage in your 19th Page, that I am concern'd to take notice of; and that is, *that 'tis unreasonable to suppose that such as lived in the times of the New Testament, or presently after, should not have the greatest Opportunities of framing right Ideas of the Ministerial Orders.* I answer, That 'tis very true they had the greatest Opportunities, and therefore we have two ancient Witnesses of the twofold Order, *Clemens Romanus* and *Polycarp.* Nor indeed is there any thing in the most ancient Writers, which, all things consider'd, do's destroy our Opinion. But yet I will add this, that it often happens, that some who have the *greatest Opportunities*, do not make the *greatest Use* of them, and therefore since they and we have one and the same Rule to go by, the safest way is for us to consider things according to that Rule; and since you grant what I say about *our primary* and *your secondary Rule*, unless you can lay a Foundation for your Notions in the *primary Rule*, the *secondary* one can yield you no Assistance.

P. 20. You take notice of my Supposition, which I used by way of Explication, in these Words: 'To make this plain, let us suppose that in one Age Men used the word Presbyters to signify their Idea of Men ordain'd in such a particular manner, and who had the Power of Ordination; and in the next Age Men us'd it to signify their Idea of those who had exactly the same Ordination, and yet had not the Power of Ordination; I say, notwithstanding their confused Idea of the Office, and notwithstanding the Use to which they design'd to apply the word *Presbyters*, if they of the former Age had, then they of the latter Age had also the Power of Ordination. To this you reply, *That what I here offer do's indeed make plain, but what? Not the Strength but the Weakness of my Argument.* For you utterly deny that *Presbyters* of the middle Order of the three, ever had exactly the same Ordination with *Presbyters* of the superior Order, or *Bishops.* I answer, that is not to the point, whether they had or no. I may make the Supposition: And to clear the Matter yet farther, and to an-

swer

swer what you next alledge, that *'tis repugnant in the very nature of the thing, since there can't be the same Ordination, where Persons are ordain'd to different Ministerial Powers.* I'll shew you how easily such a Supposition may be made. Let it then be suppos'd, that Persons are expressly by their Ordainers in two several Ages ordained to the Scripture-Office of Presbyters, and in the former Age the Power of Ordination was suppos'd to belong to the Scripture-Office of Presbyters, and in the latter 'twas suppos'd not to belong to it; or suppose the same Form of Ordination be used in both these Ages, wherein their Notions do thus differ; I say, notwithstanding their differing Notions, if those of the former have, then those of the latter have also the Power of Ordination. And 'tis a mere *flam* in you to say, *there can't be the same Ordination, where Persons are ordain'd to different Ministerial Powers.* I say they are ordain'd to the same Ministerial Powers in this Case, tho they are ordain'd to an Office, the Powers of which at different times were differently conceiv'd of. Next I apply'd this Matter to our own Case thus: 'Christ left but one sort of standing Rulers in his Church, and they were not single, but in a Plurality, and these were signify'd by the word Presbyters, (*it should have been added, or Bishops.*) But in after-times the chief of these Presbyters in a Church came to be looked on as in a distinct and higher Office than the rest, and appropriated to himself the name of Bishop, and left that of Presbyters to his Brethren, who were really of the same Office with himself: and since *that*, Men in using the Terms Bishops and Presbyters have refer'd to that Difference: If then the Presbyters had originally the Power of Ordination and Government lodg'd in them, the Incroachment of one call'd in after-times the Bishop, and the confus'd and false Ideas of those who thought and spoke of Bishops and Presbyters as distinct Officers, will not make them distinct, or alter the Power belonging to Presbyters by Original Right. You wave here the first part of my Paragraph, and therefore you will, I hope, give me leave to take it for a Truth at present, till you come to my 12th Proposition. You then add, that *what I pretend to be the Rise of the Distinction between Bishops and Presbyters, is such a mere Fiction, that you profess you could not have thought, that a Man of Sense could have taken up with such pitiful Trumpery.* You tell me, 'Tis plain, my Thoughts are here fetter'd, and could I but be so happy as to knock off these Fetters of Bigottry, and to think freely in this Case, you are sure I should quickly abandon my

Cause, which puts me on such hard Service, as to make my Sense and Reason stoop to such groundless and irrational Chimæras. I profess to you, I can't conceive what I am bigotted to, I am sure 'tis to no Party. 'Tis pure Evidence of Truth on the most impartial Search I could make, that has settled me in this Opinion, and when you can give me better Evidence against it, than I have for it, I shall easily quit it. That there was an Equality in Office among Presbyters in the first Constitution of the Church, and that yet for Order's sake there was a Priority or Precedency of one of those Presbyters, (whom I call therefore the *Chief of these Presbyters*) is what I do believe on Evidence from Scripture and Antiquity.

But the Notion of *two sort of Presbyters* is such a mere *Fidgion, and pitiful Trumpery*, as your own Party, who are equally concern'd to maintain Episcopacy, can't agree to assert; and therefore no wonder that I, who scorn the Fetters of any Party, do reject it.

You propose to me here a parcel of Queries, when and where this Episcopal Usurpation began? by what Steps it advanc'd, &c. I answer, If I could give no probable Account of any of these things, it would signify little to the establishing your Cause: because if we find the thing in After-times, and do not meet with it in the Original Constitution, we may be assur'd, that it had its beginning afterwards. You are to shew, that he who was call'd a Bishop in After-times, had a Right to such a Superiority (as you contend for) by the Scriptures, and then I shall easily grant you, that there was no beginning of any Usurpation; and indeed that there was no Usurpation at all. And supposing this is an Usurpation (which you deny without alledging any thing to prove the pretended Right) I do not so, but that I have alledg'd a very good Account of the Rise of it. Only by the way, I must put you in mind of one of your *unlucky Remarks*, that this is just like the Popish way of Disputing. Thus says the Jesuit, whose Challenge Bishop *Usher* answers: 'Your Doctors and Masters grant, that the Church of *Rome* for 400 or 500 Years after Christ did hold the true Religion. First then I would fain know what Bishop of *Rome* did first alter that Religion? In what Pope's Days was the true Religion overthrown in *Rome*? I believe it would be hard for you to tell, when the Papal Usurpations began precisely. And therefore I may well use the Bishop's Words in answer to you, p. 2. 'The Original of Errors is often-times so obscure, and their Breed so base, that howsoever it might be observ'd by such as liv'd in the same Age,

‘ Age, yet no wise Man will marvel, if in Tract of Time,
 ‘ the beginnings of many of them should be forgotten, and no
 ‘ Register of the Time of their Birth found extant.

I think the Account I have giv’n is such, as is sufficient to satisfy any reasonable Enquirer, till you are pleas’d to produce your Evidence against it out of the New Testament, and do *prove, instead of telling us, that the Word Presbyters is apply’d in Scripture to two distinct sort of Officers.* However, tho’ I think your Demand of me is unreasonable, till you have done *that*, yet I will give some brief Hints of the Reason of my Opinion. I will now (till your Proof appears) take it for granted, that the Government of every Church was lodg’d in a Body of Presbyters, in the times of the New Testament; and that these Presbyters were but of one sort, and that among them, there was some kind of Precedence for Order sake, allow’d to One, tho’ only equal to the rest in Office. And as I think this agreeable to the times of the New Testament; so I know of nothing in the next Age that contradicts it. The Appropriation of the Name Bishop, to the Chief Presbyters, and of the Name Presbyters, to the rest, signifies nothing, so long as the Power of Government (with which our Adversaries suppose that of Ordination connected) remain’d in the whole Body of Presbyters. And besides this, there are two things which I want clear Evidence of in the two first Centuries, which I think you, who build so much on Antiquity, ought to produce. (1.) That a Bishop only was suppos’d to have the Power of Ordination, and Presbyters were not. (2.) That any Presbyter who was chosen to be a Bishop, had during that time any New Ordination, or Imposition of Hands. I know, ’tis common for Men to speak of things in the Language, and according to the Customs of their own time, and so ’tis very possible that such Writers as liv’d after this Usage of ordaining such Presbyters again was begun, may be found to speak of those former times agreeably to their own: But I do not remember any Evidence brought of this from any Writers, who liv’d before the 3d Century. In this Opinion I am far from being alone. St. Jerom asserts the same concerning the Church of *Alexandria*, and the same is asserted in general, concerning the most Primitive Times of the Church, by *Hilary* the Deacon. And if a Bishop had not then a distinct Ordination from a Presbyter, I believe ’twill be hard to prove him of a different Order.

No one will wonder to meet with a distinct Ordination of a Bishop in the 3d Century, who considers that then Persons were ordain'd to those Offices, which most certainly were not of Divine Institution, such as that of *Reader*, &c. And I can't see, but that my Notion is such, as will give a fair Account of the Rise of Episcopacy; and is at the same time most consistent with the Holy Scriptures, as yours is not. But now to shew you farther, the Unreasonableness of your Demands, let us suppose you used just after the same manner; and that whereas you allow but three Orders, and the Inferior, that of Deacons, you hold to be a single Office: Let it be suppos'd that some Person should argue (as you do about Presbyters) that the Name Deacons, in Scripture, signifies more inferior Offices than one, that it signifies *Deacons properly so call'd, and Readers*; and that therefore Readers is a *fourth* Order, and should, on your denying this, ask you when this Office began? I question whether you would be able to tell the exact Time? Or whether you could produce more ancient Evidence of the distinct Ordination of a Bishop, than I can of a Reader.

I had used these Words concerning your fourth Thesis, Numb. II. p. 25. 'I grant the Signification of the Word Presbyters in a latter Age (that is the Idea the Men of the latter Age design'd to express by that Word) can't be immediately and truly judg'd of, by the Writings of a former Age (or by the Idea they design'd to express by the Word). You say *this is a plain Concession of all the four last of your seven Theses, that relate to this Point, viz. the Ambiguity of the Word Presbyters.* Well then, let us see how 'tis a plain Concession of your last Thesis, which alone can be Material; it stands thus: *What Ministerial Office has been, or is signify'd by the Office of Presbyters, in the Ages after the New Testament, particularly at the Reformation, can immediately and truly be judg'd (not by the New Testament, or Scripture, as appears by Thesis 5th; but according to Thesis 6th) only by the Writings of the said Ages after the New Testament, particularly at the Reformation, Q. E. P.* But how are my Words a plain Concession of this Proposition? I'll tell you what they are a Concession of, viz. that what Idea of the Ministerial Office has been, or is signify'd by the Office of Presbyters, in the Ages, &c. This, and no more, my Proposition grants; and what is this to your Purpose, since their Idea did not agree with the Office they design'd to speak of, but they had only a confus'd Notion of the Scripture-Office, they design'd to express by the Word Presbyters?

I fully agree with you, in what you say, p. 23. *That Wit does never appear more despicable, than when 'tis made use of for Argument.* And 'twas for that very Reason, that I despis'd the Wit I thought you design'd to shew, in forming that Argument for me, which is none of mine, but is a sorry Banter of your own, put instead of a solid Answer to my Argument; and so I leave you to the Mercy of *Aristotle*.

I had said, Letter 7. p. 13. 'I deny that Presbyters, when used to signify Officers in the Christian Church, is taken in a larger and a stricter Sense, and you'll do your Cause good Service, if you can evince the contrary. In answer to this you say, *Sir, if you'll allow of rational Grounds (and surely they ought to be allow'd of) I doubt not, but I can evince the contrary.* I assure you, Sir, I desire no better Grounds, and have waited patiently for them: But what you mean by this civil Preface to your Argument (which is, I perceive at a great Distance) I can't tell, unless it be to forestal my Judgment in favour of it, that I should believe it good, before I know what it is. Or it may be you thought I would not gratifie you in your next Desire, unless you rais'd my Expectation of a like Kindness from your self. But I am free to answer you, only as one good Turn deserves another, I expect the same from you in your next, and desire to see your *Rational Grounds*.

You say then, thus: *In the mean while, I desire you, in your next, to acquaint me by what Rule you guide your self, in judging when the Word Presbyters is, and when 'tis not taken to signify Officers in the Christian Church.* I answer, my Rule is the plain Scope of the Place where the Word is used. So sometimes 'tis used to signify *Old Men*, as *1 Tim. 5. 1.* Sometimes 'tis used to signify *Officers of the Jews*, as *Acts 4. 5.* And sometimes 'tis used to signify *Officers in the Christian Church*, as *Tit. 1. 5.* And I believe no Man will question whether it be not easie to know, when 'tis used in one Sense, and when in another; and the Truth is, I used that Caution in my Expression, to prevent needless Cavilling. For if I had said absolutely *Presbyters* signify'd so, or so, you might, perhaps, have alledg'd those Places where it signifies *Old Men*; or if I had said *Presbyters* when it signifies *Officers*, you might have objected the *Jewish Presbyters*.

As to your other Question about Deacons, I have answer'd it already, Letter 1. p. 47, 48, &c. I had used these Words, 'I deny that the Word Presbyters ever signify'd properly, such as had not the Power of Ordination. It
' sig-

‘ signify’d those that had it, and were, by Mistake, on
 ‘ look’d on not to have it. You say, *For the Truth of which*
I so peremptorily, yet barely deny, you appeal in your very Thesis
to the Concurrent Testimony of Ecclesiastical Writers; and
surely such a Testimony, when appeal’d to, ought to have some
Notice taken of it.

All Mankind will see what is your Province on my Denial
viz. to produce some of those *concurrent Testimonies*: I deny
 there are any such. And I can’t imagine what you would
 have me do. Would you have me descend to such Particulars
 as you do not mention? Besides, I did not barely deny what
 you say; but I gave Evidence, that Ecclesiastical Writers did
 design Scripture-Presbyters by that Word. So that now if
 you have any thing to alledge on this Head, produce it
 and shew, if you can, that ever they designedly used the
 Term Presbyters (meaning Officers in the Christian Church
 in an unscriptural Sense.

You had laid down this Proposition, *That the Dissenters*
from the Church of England, who are concern’d in this Contro-
versy, allow the superior and inferior Offices, but deny the mid-
dle Office to be in any Sense divinely appointed. In answer
 thereto, I said, ‘ I deny this Proposition, that the Dissen-
 ‘ ters concerned in this Controversy do deny those you call
 ‘ of the middle Office, to be in any Sense divinely appointed.
 These Words of mine you leave out, tho you say you have
 giv’n my Answer *Verbatim*. This shews clearly in what Sense
 I, as well as other Dissenters, do deny your Proposition. We
 deny indeed, that ever God has instituted any Office, to
 which belongs the Power of Preaching and Administering Sa-
 craments, without that of Government and Ordination;
 and this is that you make so much Splutter about. But then
 we deny there has ever been any such Office as this in the
 Church; for we say that those you call of the Middle-Office,
 were ordain’d to the Scripture-Office of Presbyters, and con-
 sequently had both those Powers by Divine Right belonging
 to their Office, inasmuch as Scripture-Presbyters had them.
 Now as we assert these Presbyters to be Scripture-Presbyters,
 so you assert they were Scripture-Presbyters in one Sense of
 the Word, and therefore that these are Officers of Divine
 Appointment we both agree.

The Question then between us is plainly this, Whether
 there are any Presbyters in the New Testament that are in-
 ferior to any other instituted standing Office in the Church?
 You say there are, and that in every Church there is one single
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Person who is in Office superior to the Presbyters, and who alone has the Power of Ordination and Government. Now this is what we deny, and say 'tis contrary to the Scheme of the New Testament, which lodges the Power of Government (with which that of Ordination is confessedly connected) not in the Hands of a single Person, but of a Plurality; and as I observ'd to you from Bishop *Beveridge*, this is really the true State of the Controversy; and therefore, since we deny that it does belong to a single Person, 'tis evident we deny properly what you call the Superior Office, and therefore if you can't establish that, it follows in course, that Presbyters must have the Powers I contend for. And this fully clears all that Myster.

I can leave it to the Reader to judge, whether you are yet come close to the Controversy, when you do not so much as attempt to prove, that there were two sort of Presbyters in the New Testament. This I think is the main thing you should apply your self to; for since you grant your pretended Middle-Order are Scripture-Presbyters, till you prove there are another sort of Scripture-Presbyters, what does a Multitude of Words signifie?

Page 29. You are angry I should reflect on your not having an *Imprimatur* to your *Numb. II.* and wonder that I should have no better *Light into the Rules of the University in such Cases.* Now for my very Heart, I can't learn what *one Rule of the University, in these Cases,* I have mistaken.

I did not suppose, that you immediately sought an *Imprimatur*, before or then; nor have I express'd any thing of that Nature, using only these words: 'It can't be thought that this is owing to a want of seeking it now as well as formerly. So that the Booksellers seeking it, agrees as well with my Words, as does your own, and was as much to my Purpose. I can't therefore imagine, where my Mistake of *The Rules of the University* lay, unless it be one of their Rules, to grant *Imprimaturs* without Distinction; and that therefore any Man may have an *Imprimatur* for asking; and so I was mistaken, in thinking there was any likelihood of their denying you. In this Case, I confess, their *Imprimatur* would not be very *Honourable*, nor would it much *grace yours*, or any Man's *Writings*. Now, tho I see no room left for any other Mistake of their Rules, yet I can't entertain so dishonourable a Thought of them, as that they have any such Rule as this.

But now, after all, my Mistake (I don't mean *in the Rules of the University*, but) in supposing them to refuse an *Imprimatur*, proceeded from the Respect I always bear to so learned a Body. I esteem'd the Vice-Chancellor's Act, as done in some Sense in the Name of the University, and as an Approbation of the Performance to which his Name and Licence was prefix'd. And I esteem'd it then, I confess, a considerable Evidence of their Candor ; that by their not granting a Licence, they shew'd their Dislike of such kind of Writings, as were despis'd by many, who were embark'd in the same Cause. And whatever you may think, what I said was far from an *empty Bravado*, but the Account still encreases on my Hands. Nor do I believe, that any who are Friends to my Cause apprehend any Prejudice to it from your way of writing. No, Sir, the Prejudice is apprehended by your own Friends to be to your own Cause ; of which I have an Evidence lately come to my Hands, the very Day on which I had finish'd this Answer, a Letter written by a Bigot of your Party, tho with a base Forgery, counterfeiting the Hand of an Acquaintance and Friend : The Design of which is to discourage me from writing, and to terrifie me with the Consultation of two of the famous Railers of the Age to expose me. Which is to me Evidence enough (if I had no other) that you have some Friends that approve not your Method. And I have inserted this to let the Author of that Letter know, that I value not whether his Story of the Consultation is as great a Forgery as his Letter, or (if the Story be true) to let the Gentlemen of the Consultation know, that as I fear not their Arguments, so I can easily despise all the Abusiveness and Railery they are Masters of. And besides this, I consider'd the Tendency of your Writings, which is this, to shew that the Presbyters, who took on them to ordain at the Reformation, had no Power to do it ; and that any Ordination perform'd by Presbyters, whenever it be perform'd, is invalid ; and that consequently all the Acts of such are invalid ; and this I thought highly injurious to all Protestant Churches abroad (who have no other Ordination but by Presbyters) as it does nullifie their Ministry, and the Sacraments administred among them. Now I thought the Licensing, and the approving such Writings did not the most exactly square with the late Declaration of that University, and their Design of cultivating a good Correspondence with the foreign Reform'd Churches, and particularly (I may now add) the Church of *Geneva* ; since
you

you are pleas'd in your Numb. III. to say, That on comparing Persons Pretensions with the Scripture-Rule, it appears that Calvin, &c. tho' call'd by the like Name of Presbyters, as Peter and John, &c. are sometimes call'd in the New Testament, yet they were far from having the same Ministerial Power of Ordination as they had, p. 9. And if by such Thoughts that learned Body, for whom I have a just Esteem, will judge themselves wrong'd, I am heartily sorry for it, and shall only say to them, as the Apostle does to the Corinthians, (and in much the same Sense) 2 Cor. 12. 13. *Forgive me this Wrong.* As to the Matter of my Postscript to my 7th Letter, if you had acted like a Gentleman, you would have taken no Notice of it: You may remember I us'd you so in the Matter of Commyn: But however I value not your Insinuations, I was so far from designing what I said as an *Aspersion*, that I judg'd it a Matter of *Praise*. And whatever your Suggestions may be, I do very seriously profess, that as the Mistake was not wilful at first, so had I known it before my 6th Letter was publish'd, I should have publish'd it therewith; and I no sooner heard of it, but I resolv'd to publish it the very next Opportunity, as I then declar'd to my Friend, before I knew any thing of that little Hint of *Ireland*, you ungentlely mention. And I declare, I shall be as ready to retract any Mistake I may happen to be guilty of, either in Matter of Fact or Argument, when you can convince me of it.

And thus I have done with the first Part of your Letter. I now come to the Second, where, in the first Place you review some of your Propositions, which you had laid down *Exam. Part 2d.* In your fifth Proposition, you lay down what is the Doctrine of the Threefold Order; and in your sixth, you infer that Presbyters, at the Reformation, had not any valid Authority to ordain, according to the said Doctrine. To this I answer'd you, ' That I flatly deny'd the Doctrine ' of the Threefold Order to be true; and added, I can't see, ' why you should not have apply'd your self immediately to ' the Proof of it. To this (Numb. III. p. 32.) you answer, *That your Business is to prove the Invalidity of Presbyterian Ordination; and whereas there is a Twofold sort of Proof, direct and indirect, 'tis allow'd by Logicians, that a direct Proof is always preferable, and most weighty. On which Account you did, in your Theses (not insist on the Proof of the Threefold Order, as being only an indirect or round-about Way, to prove the Invalidity of Presbyterian-Ordination, but you chose rather to) insist on*

what would amount to a direct and full Proof of the said Invalidity of Presbyterian-Ordination; namely this, that tho our own Doctrine of the Twofold-Order should be true; yet our Presbyterian-Ordination would still remain altogether invalid. For my Part, I have learnt that I am never to expect less Logick from you, than when you talk most of it. Let the Reader be Judge, whether your proving the Doctrine of the Threefold-Order to be true, would not have been the most direct Proof of the Invalidity of Presbyterian-Ordination, from your very fifth Thesis, which is this: *The Doctrine of the Threefold Ministerial Order is this, namely, that from the Apostles Times there have been these (distinct) Orders of Ministers in Christ's Church; Bishops especially, or properly so call'd, to whom alone belongs the Power of Ordination; Presbyters, or Priests especially, so call'd, to whom belongs the Power (not of Ordaining, but only) of preaching and administering the Sacraments, and Deacons especially, so call'd.* Now if this Doctrine be prov'd true by you, you give the most direct Proof that can be giv'n of the Invalidity of Presbyterian-Ordination. What can be a more direct Proof of it, than to prove that Presbyters have not the Power of Ordaining, but Bishops alone have it? To prove this, would be to prove the Invalidity of Presbyterian-Ordination, by the necessary Cause of that Invalidity, and so this would be what Logicians call *Demonstratio Alibi*, which is always allow'd to be the best Proof that can be brought. In the next Place let us see what kind of Proof you do bring. You would argue then, that Presbyterian-Ordination is invalid, supposing our Doctrine of the Two-fold-Order to be true, and this that you call a Direct, is what Logicians call an Indirect Proof. For, *Syllogismus Indirectus est vel deducens ad Incommodum, vel concludens ex Concessione.* And this latter is the very Proof you make use of. I do not, while I say this, pretend, that if you can prove from our Doctrine of the Twofold-Order, the Invalidity of Presbyterian-Ordination, it will not be sufficient, but only that this is call'd an *Indirect Proof*. And I must needs say, according as you have represented our Doctrine of the Twofold-Order, your Proof is *Indirect with a Witness*. And hence it appears, that my Second Remark is of considerable Weight.

I had said, ' Since you own that Presbyters, at the Time of the Reformation, were Officers of Divine Appointment; I lay it down for certain, that 'tis from the Divine Appointment, or Commission, we are to judge of the Pow-

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er that belongs to them. You answer, *This is true, if taken in a right Sense* (I answer, I take it in no other) *and if the Ambiguity of the Word Presbyter does not mislead me to jumble together, and confound two Offices distinct in themselves, tho the same Name Presbyters has been promiscuously apply'd to both.* (I answer, no such Ambiguity does mislead me, for there is no such Ambiguity to do it.) *To avoid the said Ambiguity, and the more clearly to discover to me what it is you own, you express it thus: I own that the Officers of the middle Order* (you should have said of the suppos'd middle Order) *of the three, at the Time of the Reformation, were Officers of Divine Appointment, (and that is enough to my Purpose) and that 'tis from the Divine Appointment, or Commission, we are to judge of the Power which belongs to them, that is, whether the Office only of preaching and administering the Sacraments, is not distinct from that of preaching and administering Sacraments, and also of ordaining.* If I had talk'd after this Rate, no doubt whole Volumes of Charges of Inconsistencies would have stunn'd my Ears. But you are privileged, I suppose, by your Logick, to find Inconsistencies in the most obvious and easie things in the World, and 'tis no Fault in you to be guilty of them at Pleasure. *Is to judge of the Power that belongs to Presbyters the same thing, as to judge whether the Office of preaching and administering Sacraments, is not distinct from that of preaching, administering Sacraments, and also of ordaining.*

If you will thus continually beg the Thing in Question, and lay it down, that there are two such Offices, you need not recur to the Divine Commission, to know whether these are distinct or no. The Nature of things plainly speaks them so. I say, therefore, that 'tis by the Divine Commission, or Appointment, you must judge whether they have only the Power of Preaching and Administering Sacraments, or whether they have the Power of Ordination and Government.

In answer to your Argument from the Sense of the times at the Reformation, I had alledg'd, *Letter 1. p. 41.* 'If we are to judge after this rate from the Sense of those times, the Argument will wound the Episcopal as well as Presbyterian Ordination. For if therefore a Presbyter at the time of the Reformation could not have the Power of Ordination, because in those times he was not look'd on to have it, and because his Ordainers did not design to give it: The same will hold against the Bishops, That if then, and for several Ages before, they were look'd on as the Pope's Creatures, and swore Subjection to him at their Ordination; and their

' their Ordainers never design'd to give them a Power to or-
 ' dain independently on the Pope, they could not then right-
 ' fully so ordain, and by Consequence all Protestant, even E-
 ' piscopal Ordinations, are invalid. You answer hereto;
Exam. Part 2. p. 7. That the Case mention'd is not parallel to
the Case in Debate; but that I quite mistake the Point debated;
For you do by no means say that Presbyters at the Reformation had
not the Power of Ordination, only because their Ordainers did not
design to give it them, ('Tis all one to my Purpose, whether
the Strefs be laid on the Design of the Ordainers, or the Sense
of the Times, or both, for the same will do in the Parallel)
but because the Power of Ordination did not belong to them by di-
vine Institution, whereas Bishops at the Reformation were in-
vested with the Power of Ordination, as belonging to them by di-
vine Institution, and so independently on the Pope, notwithstanding
the Ordainers Design, or any Oath to the contrary. I ask'd
you in my Answer, Letter 4. p. 72. 'How could the Contro-
 ' verly here in this Place be about the divine Institution,
 ' when in the beginning of your Argument you wav'd the
 ' Consideration of the Holy Scriptures? How could I think
 ' you would pretend to argue from a divine Institution, with-
 ' out having Recourse to the holy Scriptures, where alone
 ' that Institution can be found? You tell me, *the Answer is*
very easy, viz. That you wav'd the Consideration of the Holy
Scriptures in the beginning of your Argument, because you was
there speaking in reference to the Sense of the name Presbyters.
But the Controversy in reference to my third Remark relates to
the Power belonging to the Middle-Office at the Reformation,
which is to be learn'd from the divine Institution: And therefore
the Controversy must in this place necessarily be about the divine
Institution. Such Answers as these are indeed easy enough to
make, as you say, but then they signify nothing when they
are made. For in your Letter to Mr. D. you propose first to
argue without the Scriptures. You come not to the Scrip-
ture till the middle of p. 24. Before that therefore, there is
no pretence of Scripture, and yet p. 23. you tell him, that
as those of the uppermost Order of the Three were at and for some
hundred Years before the Reformation alone stiled Bishops, and
alone invested with the Power of Ordination; so the name Presby-
ters was applied only to those that were of the second Ministerial
Order, and so inferior to Bishops, and consequently not invested
with the Power of Ordination.

Produce the least shadow of Evidence if you can, that you
 are arguing from the Scriptures, or else shew how you could
 argue

argue from the Divine Institution, while you omit the Scriptures. I only refer my Reader to p. 22, 23, 24. of your Letter to Mr. Dowley. And now to shew you farther, how exactly parallel the Case I put is to that you put, I will express it in your own Words, only making the Alterations that are necessary, which shall be in a different Character, with your Words set opposite to them in the Margin. Let it then be supposed, that a Popish Adversary took up your Argument, and was endeavouring to prove thereby the Invalidity of Protestant Episcopal Ordinations, perform'd independently on the Pope, as you do the Invalidity of Presbyterian Ordination, and should say with you, Letter to Mr. D. p. 21. *Now the most natural Method to put an happy Issue to this Controversy, I take to be, laying open the true and proper State of the Question controverted: and this surely can't be better done, than by considering what it was that gave Original or Birth to this Controversy. 'Tis then too well-known to require Proof, that this Controversy, as it now stands between us and you, was occasion'd at the time of the Reformation from Popery, by some who were then call'd (a) [Bishops] who took on them to give Ordination to others, [absolutely and independently] and from whom therefore all such as have abetted or maintain'd the Validity of such Ordination, [while they rejected Ordination by Presbyters] have been stiled (b) [Episcopal Protestants] and such an Ordination has been on the same account stiled (c) [a Protestant Episcopal] Ordination. Hence it appears that the true State of this Controversy depends on the State of the Ministerial Office at the time of the Reformation, and that whosoever would judge aright of the Validity or Invalidity of (what has been ever since the Reformation call'd (d) [Protestant Episcopal] Ordination, must in the first place duly inform himself in what Sense the word (e) [Episcopus or Bishop] was taken at the time of the said Reformation, which (f) [Degree of the Order of Priesthood] was then distinguished or known by that Name, and with what Ministerial Power those then call'd (g) [Bishops] were invested by virtue of the Ordination they themselves had received. Whence by the way, I suppose 'twill also be allow'd by judicious Persons, that your common Method of having Recourse immediately, or in the very first place to the Scriptures, is not so proper. For the Question is*

(a) Presbyters.

(b) Presbyterians.

(c) Presbyterian.

(d) Presbyterian.

(e) Presbyter.

(f) Order of the Ministry.

(g) Presbyters.

- (h) Presbyters. *not, whether such as were called (h) [Bishops] in the New Testament had the Power of Ordination [absolutely and independently] but the Question we are concern'd about, is this, whether such as were call'd (i) [Bishops] at the time of the Reformation had the Power of Ordination [absolutely and independently]. And therefore since the Use of Words may, and frequently do's alter, (in-somuch as the same Word which in one Age was promiscuously applied to two Offices, in another may be appropriated to one, and that the inferior Office, or on the contrary, &c.) and since by Consequence the Sameness of Name is no conclusive Proof of the Sameness of Office or Authority, it must be allow'd, that tho it*
- '(k) Presbyters. *should be granted that those called (k) [Bishops] in the New Testament, had the Power of Ordination, [absolutely and independently] yet 'twill by no means thence follow, that those call'd (l) [Bishops] at the time of the Reformation had the Power of Ordination [absolutely and independently]. In short, then the main Stress of the Controversy we are concerned in, lies on the Use and Signification of the Word (m) [Bishops] at the time of the Reformation; which therefore comes next to be spoken to. 'Tis then well known, and acknowledg'd by all your own Writers; that at, and for some hundred Years before the Reformation, the Distinction of the (n) [several Degrees of the Order of Priesthood] as they now stand in the Church of (o) [Rome], had obtained in all Parts of the (p) [Romish Church, in which your Bishops were ordained] and that according to this Distinction, as those of the uppermost (q) [Degree of Priesthood] were at and for some hundred Years before the Reformation alone stiled (r) [Popes], and were alone invested with the Power of Ordination [absolutely and independently]. So the name of (s) [Bishops] was at and for some hundred Years before the Reformation, apply'd (t) [especially] to those that were of a (u) [lower Degree] and so inferior to (w) [Popes] and consequently not invested with the Power of Ordination [absolutely and independently]. Since then it has been already ob-serv'd that the Question in Debate is, whether such as were stiled*
- (l) Presbyters.
- (m) Presbyters.
- (n) Three Ministerial Orders.
- (o) England.
- (p) Christian World.
- (q) Order of the Three.
- (r) Bishops.
- (s) Presbyters.
- (t) Only.
- (u) Second Ministerial Order.
- (w) Bishops.

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led (x) [Bishops] at the time of the Reformation, had the Power of Ordination, [absolutely and independently], and since 'tis as certain as any thing can be made by the universal Consent of Ecclesiastical History; and since 'tis hereupon no other than what is acknowledg'd by the learned Men of your own Perswasion, that the Name (y) [Bishops] did at, and for some hundred Years before the Reformation, denote (z) [especially] such Ministers as were inferior to (a) [Popes], and were never invested with the Power of Ordination [absolutely and independently]. Hence I think it clearly follows, that the true State of the Question controverted by us, is, in short, and plain English, this, viz. "Whether a Person in Holy Orders, tho never invested himself with the Power of Ordination, [absolutely and independently] can nevertheless be truly said to have the just Power of Ordination, [absolutely and independently] or (which comes to the same) can nevertheless duly and rightly take on him to give Ordination to others [absolutely and independently.] This is the true State of the Question under Debate, put into plain English, and freed from the ambiguous Signification of the Word (b) [Bishop], (which is sometimes apply'd to the Pope, and sometimes to those of an inferior Degree, call'd especially Bishops) and restrain'd only to that peculiar Signification of the said Word, which belongs to this present Controversy, as has been above shewn.

Now the Question being thus truly and plainly stated, on which Side of it (Affirmative or Negative) the Truth lies, seems to be so clear, as to be in a manner self-evident. For common Reason teaches us, that no one can duly act beyond the Commission he receives, or beyond that Degree of Authority, wherewith he has been invested. And if so, it then follows, that such (c) [Bishops] as are concern'd in this present Controversy would not duly ordain, [absolutely and independently] since they were never invested with (d) [such] Power of Ordination; and consequently, that by taking on them to ordain, they acted beyond that Ministerial Commission they had received, or beyond that Degree of Ministerial Authority wherewith they had been invested, and therefore acted unduly or unwarrantably.

-To the Testimony of common Reason, may be added the greater and more weighty Testimony of Revelation. (And indeed the

Question being thus truly stated, Recourse is now very properly to be had to the Scriptures, for determining which Side of the Question is to be embrac'd, as being agreeable to God's revealed Will.) At therefore St. Paul argues in the forecited Rom. 10. 5. How can they preach except they be sent, namely to preach? So 'tis to be argued in this Case, How can they ordain [absolutely and independently] except they be sent namely [so] to ordain?

By this time, Sir, I suppose you see (or if you do not, the Impartial Reader will see) how parallel my Instance is, and what your Argument amounts to. For the Argument is as ridiculous on the one hand as on the other. You put off the Consideration of my Answer to your Eighth Thesis, till you come to my 7th, 8th, and 9th Propositions. And therefore I shall now come to consider what you say to my Propositions.

I shall not repeat my sixth Proposition, because you grant it; I allow the Truth of what you assert on the other hand, but withal deny 'tis of any Use to you, till you prove, that the Name Presbyter or Bishop is ever apply'd in Scripture to more than one Office in the Church.

My 7th Proposition in this; ' If Men, through a Mistake do judge two distinct Names to signifie two distinct Offices, when they really signifie but one; and accordingly do ordain Persons under those distinct Names as to distinct Offices, the Persons so ordained must, notwithstanding their Mistake, have both the same Powers inherent in them, and be equally invested in one and the same Office.

Here first you give my Proposition a Turn. *If Men, thro' Mistake, do judge one Name to signifie one Office, when it really signifies two distinct Offices, &c.* Well, Sir, What good does this Turn do you? The Question then will be, whether the Mistake lies on your Side or ours? And that I have often, but hitherto in vain, urg'd you to debate: For I shall never reckon you do so, till you have Recourse to the Divine Institutions. You say, *You doubt not but to make it clearly appear, that the Mistake lies not on your Side, but ours.* For First (you say) *I am mistaken in that I do not (or will not) understand in what Sense, or in Relation to what time you maintain, the two Names of Presbyters and Bishops, to signifie two distinct Offices; namely, in Relation to the Times, not of the New Testament, but after the New Testament, whence it follows, that all my Arguing from the Signification of the said two Names in the New Testament, is nothing to the Purpose.*

This

This Idle Cavil I have fully answer'd already; and you do not, or will not understand what I assert, that they design'd to express a Scripture-Sense by those Names (of which I have giv'n Proof) and ordain'd Persons under those Names, to Scripture-Offices, signify'd thereby. And therefore their Mistake, in thinking those Names signify'd in Scripture two Offices, does not at all hinder the Persons ordain'd under either, from having equal Powers.

(2.) You say, *I am no less egregiously mistaken as to the Testimonies of Ecclesiastical Writers.* I answer, I am not at all mistaken, but I have giv'n Proof of what I assert, and what is the only thing material to be asserted, that they used the Words, with a Design to express the Scripture-Sense of them, which at the same time they had no clear Notion of. Pray do you, instead of calling on me to produce any thing from them; answer first what I have produced already from them, and produce something out of them, if you can, contradictory to my Assertion. And this answers all your following six Propositions, which only relate to their express Idea, which is nothing at all to me. Since their Idea did not agree with that Scripture Office which they design'd to speak of.

In the next place you tell me, *My Reasoning* (in the said Proposition) *is egregiously faulty, even so faulty, as to imply more than one Absurdity.* First, *the Ordination to an Office, purely imaginary, and so null, is sufficient to invest Persons with the Powers of a real Office.* I answer, The Absurdity you talk of is wholly imaginary, and so null: For I never suppose them ordain'd to any imaginary Office, or any other than the Scripture Office of Presbyters. And your second pretended Absurdity is as silly as the former, and has been answer'd already, and so is really your next Heap of Propositions, for they all go on that Mistake, I have obviated already.

I deny therefore, that the Presbyters in Dispute, were ordain'd only to the Office of preaching and administering Sacraments: I say, as they were ordain'd to the Scripture Office of Presbyters, they were ordain'd to, and invested with all the Powers of that Scripture Office.

I shall put you in mind, that all your Propositions, with such an Alteration as I made in your Argument just now, may be turn'd against your self, viz. by putting (instead of that Office you speak of) the Office of preaching, administering Sacraments, and ordaining *dependently on the Pope*; for this (which yet was the Office of the Bishops at the Reformation) is as much an imaginary Office, and so null, as the other.

I will not again transcribe my 8th and 9th Propositions ; for you answer nothing to 'em, but the old Story of the ambiguous and promiscuous Use of the Names Presbyters, and Bishops, which I have answer'd so often, that every one will see my Propositions are such as you are not able to answer. I have only one thing more to hint to the Reader ; and that is, that he cannot now, upon the serious Perusal of your *Numb. III.* and this Answer, but see plainly that there is not one thing Material in the Controversy, from the Beginning to the End of the Book, that had not really receiv'd an Answer before. And 'tis like your next may be of the same kind ; and then I would not have him wonder, if I forbear to publish the same Things over again. And now, Sir, having this Apprehension of your next, I think it proper to tell you, that for the few good Words you have now and then given me, I thank you ; and for the many hard Words, and dis-ingenuous, but causeless Reflections, you have been pleased to bestow upon me, I do, from my very Soul forgive you, Desiring that no Controversy should ever entrench upon my Charity.

And so I remain, Honoured Doctor,

Your most Affectionate and Faithful

Servant in C H R I S T,

Newbury, July
the 23d, 1707.

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JAMES PEIRCE.

A D V E R T I S E M E N T.

MR. Peirce's Seven Letters, in Answer to Dr. Wells against the Dissenters ; are sold by *John Lawrence* at the *Angel* in the *Poultry*, 1707.

7.
SOME
CONSIDERATIONS

On the

SIXTH CHAPTER

Of The

Abridgement

Of the

London Cases:

Containing, A

VINDICATION

Of the

Office for Baptism,

And Particularly of the

Sign of the Cross.

By JAMES PEIRCE.

LONDON :

Printed for J. Lawrence, at the Angel
in the Poultry. 1708.



Printed for J. Lawrence, at the Angel
in the Tower 1708.

THE PREFACE.

IT Seems very plain and obvious, That they who impose any Terms of Communion upon either Ministers or People, are bound to give a full and clear Account of these Three things: First, The Lawfulness of the things imposed, that so they who submit to them, may do it with an entire Satisfaction, and may be free from all Uneasiness and Perplexity in reflecting upon their Practice. Secondly, The Usefulness of the things imposed; for things Lawful may not be Expedient, and for Edification. Thirdly, Their own Authority to impose them; for it is very possible, that Lawful things may be imposed by those who have no Power to impose them; and whoever does innovate in the Church of God, and introduce and impose Customs, of which we have no Footsteps in the Holy Scriptures, and does not at the same time produce such a Seal of his Commission from God as our Lord did, may very justly be asked that

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Question,

The Preface.

Math. 21. *Question*, By what authority dost thou
23. these things ? and who gave thee this
authority ? Till these Three things are well
cleared, I cannot see that either Ministers
or People are bound to obey the Imposers ;
or that they have any thing more to do, than
to weigh the Strength of those Arguments
which the Imposers do alledge in their own
Behalf, and to answer them : But in the
Management of the chief Controversy before
us, these things seem to be strangely over-
look'd.

The Author seems to take it for granted,
That the Imposers have Authority for what
they do : He alledges not any thing in the
Ceremony of the Cross, that carries in
it any tolerable Appearance of Usefulness :
The only thing he aims at is to shew, That
the Sign of the Cross is not proved Un-
lawful by two or three Objections that are
made against it : So that if a Man should
ask those plain Questions, Cui bono ? and
Quo jure ? To what good Purpose ? and
by what Right are these Ceremonies impo-
sed ? he must (for ought I can find in the
Case) be still to seek for an Answer. One
great part of his Defence consists of Citati-
ons from the Fathers, concerning the Custom
of ancient times ; and herein I have thought
my self obliged to follow him, and must con-
fess, that it is no small Satisfaction to me,

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to find that this Ceremony was not used in Baptism in the most Primitive, that is, the best Ages of the Church ; that it was not used till the Purity of the Church began to be Ecclipsed, by her Temporal Preferment : But I am sensible, that a great part of the Case, and of this Answer to it, will be lost, with reference to those who look for their Religion only in their Bibles, and who have not Ability or Opportunity to inquire into the Opinions and Practices of those that lived in ancient times. I have followed the Abridgement, rather than the Case it self ; and therein I have consulted not only my own ease, but the Readers too ; for probably my Discourse would have otherwise been more faulty in length than it is already. I have (for the Reason I hinted before) confined my self to the Consideration of my Author's Arguments, and have forbore to start any new ones ; and this Method I thought I had the more Right to use, considering who is the Aggressor. But there is one thing that is but lightly touched here and there in the following Discourse, that deserves to have more particular notice taken of it here, and that is, how far the Laity are concerned in this Ceremony ; and whether there be not just cause for them to scruple Lay-Conformity in this point.

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A wide Difference has been made, between Ministerial and Lay-Conformity ; but perhaps, if the Foundation of that Difference be carefully examined, it will not appear to be so solid as some have imagined. A Lay-man, that observes that the Pastors of the Church here among us are divided into Nonconformists and Conformists, and that would resolve himself who are the most rightful Pastors to whom he ought stately to adhere, is bound to consider the Merits of the Cause depending between them, and consequently must examine the several Points of Conformity which are required of Ministers ; and if upon the whole he judges that they have just reason to refuse Conformity, he is not by any means to forsake their Ministry, however they may in the discharge thereof be despised, persecuted, or not encouraged by either Prince or People : So that it seems plain to me, That the People are to look upon themselves concerned in all the Terms that are imposed upon their Ministers : But in this Ceremony of the Cross, I conceive they are more particularly and immediately concerned.

Let us therefore suppose, That a Lay-man (who is convinced that the use of the Cross in Baptism is sinful) has a Child to be Baptized that is in very good Health, and
concern-

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concerning whom he is not apprehensive of any Danger; What course should this Person take? Shall he conform as a Lay-man, and bring his Child to be Baptized by those that will not do it without the Addition of the Sign of the Cross? Shall it satisfy that it is the Minister (and not he) that sins in using it? What reason can there be, why a Man should have his Child Baptized by Men who will use a Ceremony which he judges sinful, when he may have him Baptized by others without it? Or how can a Man chuse to have his Child Baptized in a way he esteems sinful, and yet think himself guiltless? And therefore, supposing that a Minister of the Church of England will not Baptize such a Person's Child without this Sign, it seems plain to me, that he is bound to seek out for some other Minister that will. I know there are some Ministers in the Church of England, who profess they are willing to yield to the Scruples of Parents in this Matter, and to Baptize their Children without the Sign of the Cross: But it deserves well to be considered, both by Ministers and People, whether this Latitude be allowed them by their Oath of Canonical Obedience, and their Subscription, wherein they promise, That they will use the Form prescribed (in the Book of Common-Prayer) in Publick Prayer and Administration of

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Sacraments, and no other. These Ministers are accused by some of their Brethren, as guilty of no less a Crime than Perjury ; and I confess, they seem to me to be so restrained (by their Oath and Promise) to the appointed Form, as not to be allowed to make the least Alteration in their using it : But perhaps some may say, There is a Form for Private Baptism, wherein the Sign of the Cross is left out, and therefore a Minister may Baptize such a one's Child in Private, according to that Form, consistently with his Oath and Promise : But the Answer to this is obvious ; For, 1st, The Form for Private Baptism is only to be used in cases of great Necessity, as appears by the Second Rubrick before the Office for Private Baptism. What this Necessity is, is plain, by the Sixty-ninth Canon, viz. The Infant's Weakness, or being in danger of Death ; and the same appears by another Rubrick in the Office it self, where we have these Words ; Yet nevertheless, if the Child which is after this sort Baptized, DO AFTERWARD LIVE, it is expedient, &c. This appears likewise by the haste in which Private Baptism is performed ; let him say the Lord's Prayer, (says the Third Rubrick) and so many of the Collects—— as the time and present exigence will suffer :

But

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But nothing can be more contrary to the Orders of the Church, than for a Minister to Baptize a Child, that is not weak or in danger of Death, in a Private House : The Church declares against this in Two Rubricks (viz. the first before Publick, and the second before Private Baptism) except in cases of great Necessity. It cannot be said, that the Parent's dislike of the Sign of the Cross is ever, in the Sense of the Church, a sufficient cause of any such Exigence and Necessity, as will justify Private Baptism : For it is very plain, that the Church designed in a very different manner to treat those who should alledge the Unlawfulness of this Ceremony, as a Reason against having their Children publicly Baptized. He that reads the Sixth Canon will see, She is so far from having any design of Indulgence towards such a one, that on the contrary, She thunders out against him, Let him be Excommunicated, ipso facto, and not be Restored, until he Repent, and publicly revoke such his wicked Error. How then can a Minister be true to his Oath of Canonical Obedience, who treats those with Indulgence, whom the Church treats with Excommunication ? 2dly, Where the Form for Private Baptism is in the case of Necessity used, it is expected by the Church, That if the Child do afterward live,

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live, he should be brought to the Church, and there be signed with the Sign of the Cross. But in the case before us, a Minister Baptizes the Child without any such Necessity as the Church allows, and when he knows for certain, that he will not be afterwards brought to the Congregation according to the Church's Order: So that I confess, I cannot see how a Minister of the Church of England can, consistently with his Oath and Promise, omit the Sign of the Cross in Baptism, merely to comply with the Scruples of the Parent. But now to finish this Matter, my Lay-man's Case comes at last to this Issue; Whether he shall seek Baptism for his Child, of a Minister of the Church of England, who will not administer it but in a way which he is convinced is sinful, or who must violate his Oath and Promise, if he does it in a way that he is satisfied is in it self Lawful: Or whether he shall seek it of another Minister, who is not of the Church of England, and who is not therefore cramped with any such Oath or Promise, and who will do it in a way in which he is intirely satisfied?

And now I have stated this Case, I will acquaint my Reader, that it is so far from being an imaginary one, or a wild Supposition, that it is a Case that has actually happened. Some in constant Communion
with

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with the Church of England, have upon these very Considerations thought themselves obliged, not to seek Baptism for their Infants from those Ministers, upon whose Ministry, in all the other parts of it, they have constantly attended, and have sought it elsewhere; and to their farther Consideration I shall commend this one thing; How they can think themselves bound to be in so constant Communion with a Church, wherein they judge that one of the Sacraments is not administred with Purity enough for their own use; and what reason they can have, for not communicating in other things with those Ministers, the Validity of whose Ministrations, and the Righteousness of whose Cause, they do by this Practice acknowledge.

This Ceremony has been the occasion of much Controversy, and has been learnedly handled by several, and particularly by the Learned Robert Parker, in his Treatise upon the Subject; whom I the rather mention, that I may tell the Reader, that he will find many things in him which he will here meet with; several of which I freely own I borrowed from him, though a great many of them I had observed and set down in the first rude Draft of these Papers, before I had had the Happiness so much as to see his Learned Piece: They were drawn

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up presently after the Publishing of the Abridgement, and have lain by ever since for some Reasons, which it will not avail the Reader to know, and which therefore he shall not be troubled with. I hope it will appear, that my Design is the Peace of the Church, (which is not to be expected, till those Things are removed which are matter of Offence) and this Design is, I doubt not, pleasing to GOD, whatever Acceptation it shall meet with from Men.

7 DE 61

The

**The Sixth Chapter of
the Abridgement of the London
Cases, which I propose to con-
sider, is Intituled ; *Objections
against our Form of Baptism,
and particularly that of the Sign
of the Cross, Answered : And
these Objections are ;***

I. **I**T is said, That all Baptized Infants. Abridg.
are supposed to be Regenerated, of pag. 126.
which, some think, we cannot be cer-
tain : But since they are Baptized in-
ta Christ's Body, 1 Cor. 12. 13. and into
Christ, and have put on Christ, Gal. 3. 27. and
consequently are new Creatures, 2 Cor. 5. 17.
Since, I say, they are Baptized for the Remis-
sion of Sins, Acts 2, 38. and since Baptism is
called the washing of Regeneration, Tit. 3. 5.
therefore the Scripture, as well as our Church,
supposes them to be Regenerated ; unless the
Ordinances and Promises of God are of none
Effect towards them.

A Man may believe the Ordinances and
Promises of God to be of very good Effect,
and yet doubt, Whether all are Regenerated.
whom the Church Baptizes. Should it be
supposed (which yet some Learned Men even
of

of the Church of *England* have denied) that where-ever Baptism is in all respects rightly administred, that there the Holy Spirit does Regenerate; yet may it be doubted, whether her asserting all to be Regenerated whom she Baptizes is true; because it may be they are not all the proper Subjects of Baptism. It is not a Matter clear from all doubt, that Bastards, or the Children of notorious Infidels, or of debauched and scandalous Persons, are by Baptism to be received into the Church; especially if, as it often happens, the Sureties are of the same Stamp with the Parents: Now, if it be doubtful whether such Children ought to be received, we cannot be charged with accounting the Ordinances and Promises ineffectual, because we question, whether such have the ordinary benefit of Baptism: But it is no wonder, that the Church should pronounce all she Baptizes Regenerated; he that looks into the other parts of her Office for Baptism will see, that she need not lay the stress upon Baptism, the Infants are supposed to be Regenerated before, unless an unregenerate Person can be a true Believer. I am sensible of many Difficulties about Baptism, and therefore would not be peremptory in my Determinations: On the one hand I must own, that many Expressions in the Scripture about Baptism, the Language of the Ancients, who called it Regeneration, together with my Charity, incline me to a Latitude in this matter: But on the other hand, when I consider it is in the Parent's Right that the Child is Baptized (as the Promise is to Christians and their Seed,

Seed, *Acts* 2. 39.) and that though Persons may, by a visible Profession, have a Right to the external Ordinances and Priviledges of the Church, yet nothing less than true Repentance and Faith, will give them a Right to the spiritual Benefits of the Covenant in the sight of God : I say, when I consider this, I am at a loss how to assign by the Promise greater Benefits to the Child, in the Parents Right, than do belong to the Parent himself ; and methinks Mr. *Hales* Proposal is very reasonable, That particular and private Fancies should have no place in a publick Liturgy : It is reasonable a Latitude should be left to Men's Sentiments, and that very doubtful Matters should not be determined by it.

But it is the Rubrick (which ought to have been here considered) which is more liable to Objection ; “ That it is certain by God's Word, that Children which are Baptized, dying before they commit actual Sin, are undoubtedly saved. If this Indefinite Expression is not equivalent to an Universal one, no one can doubt of it ; but if it be (as it plainly is) to be understood of all Children, it ought first to be shewn, that all Children have a Right to Baptism ; for otherwise it may so happen, that some Children may be Baptized that have no Right at all, and then it will not be *certain, that they are undoubtedly saved*. I confess this Rubrick, as it stood in the Old Common-Prayer-Book, was less liable to Exception ; because it seem'd only to declare, that this was the utmost the Church could do for them, and that
there

there was no absolute necessity of Confirmation, but that they might be saved without it; and this the Dissenters acknowledged to be very true; but yet thinking that there was no need of any such Rubrick, and that as it was worded it was liable to a bad Construction, they desired it might be left out. And that the *Reader* may see that our Brethren (who have given us abundance of hard Words as a parcel of contentious and humoursome Schismatics) did not act upon the most charitable and healing Principles, I will recite the Rubrick as it was formerly, and upon comparing both together, he will be satisfied, that the Alteration that was made was not calculated for the lessening, but the widening our Differences, that being left out which before made it at all capable of a tolerable Sense in the Apprehensions of the Objectors. The Words therefore were formerly these;

“ And that no Man shall think that any
 “ Detriment shall come to Children by deferring of their Confirmation, he shall know
 “ for truth, that it is certain from God’s
 “ Word, that Children being Baptized, have
 “ all things necessary to Salvation, and be
 “ undoubtedly saved. By which and several the like Instances, it is very plain, the Design of some Men in 1662. was to drive the Dissenters from the Communion of the Church of *England*, however, they have been since wofully becalled and abused for leaving it.

’Tis Objected, that God-fathers and God-mothers have no Authority to Act or Covenant in their Names.

Dissenters

Dissenters do not absolutely condemn the Use of God-fathers; there are some Cases, in which they acknowledge them necessary, as if both the Parents are dead, &c. but the Objection that lyes against your Practice, is your excluding the Parent from that which does primarily belong to him, as is plain, from the Words of the Convocation; † “ No † *Can. 29.*
 “ Parent shall be urged to be present, nor be
 “ admitted to answer as God-father for his
 “ own Child. We are told by our Author, in the very Page before, That “ it is very
 “ probable the Apostles made Parents, &c.
 “ stipulate for their Minors when they Bapti-
 “ zed them. And is the Church grown wiser than the Apostles, that the Parents must not now be admitted to stipulate for their own Children? Certainly, since the chief care of educating Children lyes upon the Parents, it is very fit they should solemnly oblige themselves to it. Our Author's Answer to the Objection is,

1. *That the Sureties are procured by the Parents; and therefore, since it is granted that the Parents may act in behalf of the Infant, the Sureties have all that Authority which the Parents can give them.*

We think that they not only may, but ought to act in the behalf of the Infant; and that therefore it is contrary to all Reason and Right, that they should be thus excluded: And what reason there can be to oblige Persons to act by a Proxy or Representative, when they are able and desirous to act in their own Persons, is not easy to imagine.

2. *The Church does hereby take great Security, that the Infant shall be religiously brought up, in as much as besides their Parents, an Obligation is laid upon others also to take care of it.*

But there is not the least hint given by the Church of any such Obligation that lyes upon the Parents, but they transfer their whole Duty to others ; and I hardly believe, that the Church would take the same Security for her Revenues, that she does for the religious Education of her young Members ; I mean, where the principal Debter, and he from whom most may in reason be expected, is left out in the Obligation. There would be some colour for this Practice, if only scandalous Persons were debarred from performing that Office for their Children, and were obliged to procure understanding and religious God-fathers ; whereas now there is none at all, when all Parents are equally excluded, and no Person (according to the Canons†) can be refused for a God-father or God-mother, that has been once at the Communion of the Church of *England* ; and even this Limitation (however wide the Communion of the Church is) is far from being strictly observed.

† *Can. 29.*

If the Parents should dye, or be negligent, the Sureties are engaged to admonish the Child, and have greater Authority, and better Advantages of doing so than other Persons.

And therefore if the Church looks upon them obliged only in such cases, let the chief Obligation be laid (where it ought) upon the Parents.

And

And in this Age, when the Duty of Christian Reproof is so generally omitted, 'twere well if the Defect were this way a little supplied: But it is by no means fit that the opportunity thereof, and the Obligation thereto should be taken away.

This is answered already, Let the Parent enjoy his own Right, and let only fit and competent Persons be permitted to join with him, and I conceive this Dispute is at an end.

If it be said, that this is seldom practised (the Truth of which Objection is not denied) I answer that the Goodness of a Rule is to be judged of by the Good that is done, where it is kept, and not where it is broken.

The Goodness of a Rule is to be judged of not only by the Good that it aims at, but by its being also in all respects adapted to the obtaining or enforcing that Good; and upon the Considerations before alledged, we judge the defect in Practice, to be greatly owing to a defect in the Rule it self.

And if the Dissenters have nothing to say, but that it is neglected, they may remove this Objection themselves by returning to the Church, and increasing the number of those that observe it: Thus they shall have the benefit of the Order of the Church, and the Church the benefit of their Examples.

The benefit of the Church's Order will (I suppose) be no great Temptation to any Man, who considers he is thereby deprived of the opportunity of offering his own Child to God. And if the Dissenters were sensible of any Benefit of the Order of the Church, they might practice it as they are, whether you will

suffer them to return or no. As to the Benefit of our Examples, we are willing and desirous you should have them in your Church, if you please to yield to such Concessions as you acknowledge you can make, and you know we can in Conscience comply with : Though I confess my Aversion to Suretiship would prevent my engaging here, if there were not special reason for it, and such as would oblige me in case of need to be at the expence and care of the Child's Education. I am apt to think, that an Obligation heretolies upon the Sureties, from whom alone the Church does receive any Security. And I think my Lord of *Sarum* says truly, † " That no one ought to do this Office for another, " but he that is willing to charge himself " with the Education of the Child for whom " he answers : And I suppose no doubt will be made of this, by those * who hold, That the Persecutions which cut off the Parents, and so left the poor Infants incapable of Christian Education, without the help of Sureties, were one reason that made God-fathers and God-mothers the more necessary in the first Ages of the Church. And now if this Doctrine were very generally preached, I am apt to think it would soon put an end to the Practice.

As for the Interrogatories put to the Sureties, and their Answers, they are a solemn Declaration of what Baptism obliges us to, and that Infants stand engaged to perform it when they come to Age : This is the known meaning of the Contract, and therefore I see not why it should be said to be liable to Misunderstanding.

But

† *Past.*
Car. p. 186.

* *Protest.*
Reconciler,
part 2. p.
274.

But these Interrogatories and Answers do seem very much to countenance the Error opposed in the preceding Chapter. The Questions are propounded to the Child, tho' he being incapable of Understanding and answering them himself, does both by his Sureties. This seems to imply the necessity of an actual Profession of Faith, to be made by every one before he is Baptized; and if that be once granted, I do not see how we can defend *Infant-Baptism*. But farther, these Interrogatories and Answers are so liable to Misunderstanding, that it is evident, our Author himself has misunderstood them. One Question which the Minister asks is this, *Wilt thou be Baptized in this Faith?* and the Answer is, *That is my Desire*. This I take to be no Declaration of what Baptism obliges us to, nor of what the Infant stands engaged to perform when he comes to Age. If the *Dissenters* practiced any thing like this, it is easy to imagine how they would have been treated for it. I will not deny that *St. Augustine* and some others, have some Expressions that favour the Infants promising by their Sureties: But the vicarious Baptism for the Dead among the *Cerinthian* Hereticks, is undoubtedly the most ancient Precedent for the vicarious Sponson; and perhaps to them the rise of this Practice is owing: But whoever have been the Abettors of this Practice, it is evidently absurd. How can an Infant be supposed to believe all the Articles of the Creed? or to renounce or desire things that he is capable of having no Notion of? It is plain, the Answers contain more than a Declaration

of what Baptism obliges us to; they contain a Declaration of the Infants present Faith, and renouncing the Devil, &c. and the Baptizing him in that Faith profess, does import his Obligation to continue therein. It seems much more reasonable to me, to have this Profession made by the Parents in their own Name, (as it is through them that the Children have a Right to the Promise, *Acts 2. 39.*) and to take Security of them, that they will use their utmost Endeavours to bring up the Infant in the same Faith, &c. than to require any Persons to declare that concerning the Child, which there is no reason to believe to be true, or which if it were true, there is no possibility of their knowing, or to make them promise that which it is not in their power to perform.

But that which is most disliked, is the Sign of the Cross in Baptism; against which it is objected, (1.) That the Sign of the Cross has been notoriously abused by the Papists; that our retaining it makes us Partakers of their Superstitions and Idolatry.

But it is not simply the Abuse that is alleged; the Force of this Objection appears much stronger, when the other Consideration that has been urged is joined herewith. The Cross in Baptism may (your selves being judges) be as well omitted; the Worship of God will not be in the least impaired thereby; and therefore, since there is no need of it, and it is a thing so liable to abuse, and has been most notoriously abused, it ought now to be laid aside; especially, since your Brethren account it sinful, and the retaining
of

of it only occasions Strife and Contenti-
on among *Protestants*. But let us consider
the Answer that is returned to this Objection.

*As to the first Pretence, though I readily
acknowledge, that the Cross has been notori-
ously abused by the Papists, yet this does not
prove our retaining of it to be unlawful, if we
consider these Three things: 1. That the use
of this Sign was common in the Primitive times,
and is more ancient than any of those Corrup-
tions, for which we differ from the Papists.*

It may not be amiss, that I should here
observe to the Reader, whence it is that our
Brethren borrow the Weapons wherewith
they endeavour to defend themselves. In
this Chapter he will meet with the same Ar-
guments which *Suarez* † and others use, to
prove the Holiness of Crosses and Images, viz. *†Tom. 1. in Thom. di-
Antiquity, the Authority of holy Men that put. 54.*
have used them, the Presence of God that
hath wrought Miracles by them, and the Be-
nediction of the Church. And as to this pre-
sence of Antiquity, I will readily grant some
use of this Sign to be as old as *Tertullian's*
time, (as his Testimonies prove) but deny
that that is a Rule for us; and it is worth
observing, that the very first Author that
mentions the use of this Sign, does likewise
mention such Superstition in the using it, as
the Church of *England* does not approve of, or
at least does not practice; and it will be evident
from the following Discourse, that there are
some things that are rejected by the Church
of *England*, but retained by the *Papists*, that
are full as ancient as the Sign of the Cross;
so that a Learned Doctor of the Church of
B 4 *England*

England, has not scrupled *to tax* the pretence of retaining this and other Ceremonies, out of a Reverence to Antiquity, with [†] *Hypocrisy*. But to proceed to our Author's Testimonies, let us consider what he adds :

[†] See Prot. Recon. part I. p. 297. * De Cor. Mil. Tertullian * *speaks of it as of a Practice which Tradition had introduced, Custom had confirmed, and the Believers Faith had observed and maintained.*

The Reader must not conclude from hence, that *Tertullian* is speaking concerning the use of the Cross in Baptism ; for in truth, he is speaking concerning the frequent and superstitious use of it, which is still retained by the *Papists* : He is speaking of that use of it, which our Author himself makes one difference, between the Popish and the Church's use of it : *Our use* (says he ||) *even of this transient Sign, is nothing like the Popish use of it, for the Papists use it on all Occasions.*

This using it then on all Occasions, is supposed to be a *Corruption*, for which we differ from the *Papists* ; and yet by this very Testimony that is alledged it appears, that this Corruption is as old as the Sign it self : And I cannot but wonder, so much stress should be laid upon these Words of *Tertullian*, when his Authority is and must be rejected in some other Customs, to which these Words are as much applied as to the Cross ; and to clear this, I will set down his Words more largely. For want therefore of a Scripture Proof of his Assertion, he has recourse to Custom and Tradition, and reckons up several Practices, for which they had no other Rule, " That " I may begin (*says he*) with Baptism ; as " we

“ we are going into the Water, we do pro-
 “ test (as we did also afore that in the
 “ Church, before the Bishop) that we re-
 “ nounce the Devil, and his Pomp and An-
 “ gels : After that, we taste a mixture † of
 “ Milk and Honey, and from that time for † *Lactis &*
 “ a Week together we forbear to go into the *mellis con-*
 “ Bath. * The Sacrament of the Eucharist, *cordia, else-*
 “ that was instituted by our Lord, we receive *where he*
 “ at Meal-times, and at all other times, in *terms it*
 “ our Assemblies, before Day, and only from *Societas.*
 “ the Hands of the Bishops. We make Ob- * Or, *The*
 “ lations for the Dead, and for their || Mar- *Sacrament*
 “ tyrdom on a stated Day yearly. We reckon *of the Eu-*
 “ it unlawful to Fast, or to Worship kneel- *charist,*
 “ ing, on a Lord’s-day, and all the while *which was*
 “ between *Easter* and *Whitsunday*. We take *appointed by*
 “ great care that none of our Wine or Bread *our Lord at*
 “ should fall to the Ground : And upon every *a Meal-*
 “ Motion, at our going out, or coming in, when *time, and to*
 “ we put on our Clothes, or our Shoes, or *all, (i. e.*
 “ go into the Bath, when we come to the *the apostles*
 “ Light, or to the Table, or to Bed, or sit *in general)*
 “ down, or whatsoever we do, we sign our *we receive*
 “ Foreheads with the Sign of the Cross. If *in our As-*
 “ you seek for a Law of the Scriptures for || *semblies be-*
 “ these and such other Institutions, you will *fore day, &*
 “ find none ; Tradition is alledged to have *only from*
 “ introduced them, Custom to have confirm- *the Hands*
 “ ed them, and the Faith of Christians to *of the Bi-*
 “ have observed them. Thus far *Tertullian*. *shops.*
 Now if his Authority is good, why are not
 all those things practiced for which he here
 vouches ? How is it fair to urge his Authori-
 ty in one case, and reject it in so many others ?
 Moreover, it appears by *Tertullian*, † that † *De Bap-*
 in *tismo*.

in his time they used Anointing in Baptism, which the Papists still use : But the Church of *England* therein differs from them, and from *Tertullian* too : So that for this Corruption for which we differ from them, the Papists have as good and as ancient Authority, as the Church of *England* has for the Cross in Baptism ; nay, I may say they have much better : For, 1. His Treatise *de Baptismo* is both more Ancient and more Orthodox, than that *de Coronâ*, out of which our Author has taken his Citation. The first was written before, and the latter after *Tertullian* was gone over to the Heresy of *Montanus*, which I shall have occasion to mention again presently. 2. *Tertullian's* Words make nothing to our Author's purpose ; for as the Reader may easily see, *Tertullian* says not a Word of the Cross in Baptism, but speaks only of the vulgar use of it, which the Church of *England* has now rejected : And indeed, if the Practice of the Church in *Tertullian's* time were to be judged of by this Passage (which our Author is pleased to think for his purpose) one would conclude, that the Cross (however common the use of it was) was not as yet brought into Religious Worship, or tacked to any of God's Ordinances : For had the Cross been thus used at that time, he would without doubt have given us some hint of it ; had it been used in Baptism, he would have mentioned it towards the beginning of what I have set down from him ; among the other uninstituted Customs used in Baptism, or else among those many Instances that he gives us in the latter end of the

use

use of it, he would have put down this also. For my own part, I cannot find any thing in *Tertullian* sufficient to persuade me, that it was thus used in his time. There is no mention made of it in that Treatise that he wrote concerning Baptism, where he particularly describes the Ceremonies used by them in the administering it. Nor has our Author helped me to so much as one Passage of this Nature out of his Writings. I know there is one Passage that is often cited (which is the only one that can be with any colour alledged) and that I think is easily answered, by comparing it with *Tertullian's* other Writings, viz. those *de Baptismo*, & *de Coronâ*. I conclude therefore, that the manner in which this Sign is used by the Church of *England*, does not as yet appear more ancient, nor indeed so ancient as some of those Corruptions for which we differ from the *Papists*.

Which Words (of Tertullian) together with his frequent and familiar mention of it, make it very improbable, that he received it from the Montanists.

BUT how do THESE WORDS make it improbable? just in the same manner as this Treatise of our Author's about the Cross, makes it improbable that he received it from the Church of *England*. Our Protestant Writers have, I think, agreed, that *Tertullian* was a *Montanist* when he wrote this Treatise *de Coronâ*, and the same is granted by † *Du Pin*, a judicious and candid *Papist*; † *Nouvelle* so that these Words signify no more to prove *Bibliothec.* that he had it not from the *Montanists*, than part 1. pag. they 91, 92.

they do to prove that they used it in Baptism. Well, but *these Words, together with his frequent and familiar mention of it, will make it very improbable*: But where is his frequent and familiar mention of it to be found? In his Orthodox Treatises written before he turned *Montanist*? I confess that would be very much to the purpose: But I do not find that he does in any of those Treatises clearly mention this Custom: Nor has our Author helped me to any Instances of that Nature; and till he does, I shall be ready to conclude, that because he frequently and familiarly mentions it after that he turned *Montanist*, and mentions it not at all while he remained Orthodox, that therefore it is very probable, that he received it from the *Montanists*: And it is to me very considerable, that in the Treatise which he wrote concerning Baptism, before he turned *Montanist*, he should mention nothing of it, which he would most certainly have done, had it then been used among the Orthodox in Baptism. I might add, that from *Tertullian* himself, in the very place which I have cited, it seems very probable, that he is mentioning and endeavouring to recommend some *Montanistical* Customs; and it is not unlikely, that this is one of them, which he therefore puts last of all, that so by considering the rest before they came at this, they might be the better prepared to digest it; and to this purpose likewise I understand him, when a little after he tells us, that
 “ whatever is agreeable to Reason becomes a
 “ Law, let who will start it; (i. e. let him
 be Friend or Enemy, counted Orthodox or Heretical)

retical) and then he adds, " Don't you think
 " that any of the Faithful may appoint and
 " contrive (*any Rite*) so it be worthy of
 " God, promotes Discipline, and is profitable
 " for Salvation; since our Lord has said,
 " Why judge ye not your selves that which
 " is right? He tells us also, " That we are
 " only to see, whether the Tradition be a-
 " greeable to right Reason, whoever is the
 " Author of it; q. d. *Have no respect of Per-*
sons, reject not anything I plead for, because
Montanus first insisted on it, only see whether
what he, or any other Person says, be agreea-
ble to Reason. Which Passages, I think, make
 it probable, that he received this Custom
 from the *Montanists*. Doubtless, *Tertullian*
 received several other Customs, which he
 there mentions from the same Hands.
 We meet not with the Trine Immersion be-
 fore this, nor the tasting the Milk and Ho-
 ney. Their forbearing the Bath *Tertullian*
 † himself mentions, as objected against the † *De Jeju-*
Montanists by the *Psychici*, the Nick-name *nin*, cap. 1.
 he is pleased to give the Catholicks; and in
 like manner he speaks of their * *Fasts*; and * *Ibid.*
 if *Apollonius* (cited by *Eusebius* ||) may be || *Hist. Ec.*
 credited, *Montanus* was the first that made *lib. 5. c. 12.*
 Rules for the fixing and stating *Fasts*. The
 Oblations that he mentions for the Dead have
 the same Date, and are I suppose of the same
 Original: *Tertullian* is their first Voucher,
 who speaks of them in a Treatise † which he † *De Mono.*
 wrote expressly against the Catholicks. cap. 10.

Forty Years after him (*Tertullian*) and a-
 bout Two Hundred after Christ, (*sc.* his Death,
 and not according to the Vulgar Æra; for
Tertul.

Tertullian wrote this *Treatise de Coronâ* after
 † *Hom. 2.* the Year Two Hundred) *Origen* † mentions
 in *Ps. 38.* those, who at their Baptism were signed with
 this Sign.

But it is not certain, whether this be the
 Testimony of *Origen*, or of *Ruffinus*, who dy-
 ed in the beginning of the Fifth Century. It
 is cited out of a Translation of *Ruffinus*, and
 the Original is lost; and it is well known,
 that *Ruffinus* took a great liberty in transla-
 ting *Origen*, left out and added what he plea-
 sed. Our Author could not be ignorant of
 this, for every Body complains of it; and
 usually in citing any of those Translations,
 give the Reader a Caution. And after all,
 it is not said expressly, that they were signed
 with this Sign in Baptism. He warns Chri-
 stians, not to give the Devil advantage against
 them to upbraid them in this manner; "Be-
 hold this Man was called a Christian, and
 signed with Christ's Mark in his Forehead,
 but he had my Laws and my Mark written
 upon his Heart. Behold he that renoun-
 ced me and my Works in Baptism, hath
 again set himself to the doing my Works,
 and hath obeyed my Laws. I own these
 Words may be understood according to our
 Author's mind; but if we consider what *Ter-
 tullian* says of their use of this Sign, it will
 appear, that there is no absolute necessity of
 understanding them in this Sense.

And about One Hundred Years after, St.
 * *Despir. f.* *Basil* * gives this Usage the Venerable Title of
 c. 27. an Ecclesiastical Constitution, or fixed Law of
 the Church, that had prevailed from the Apo-
 fles Days, that those who believe in the Name
 of

of the Lord Jesus Christ should be signed with the Sign of the Cross.

Here I might alledge, that very many Protestants have doubted, whether this be a genuine Piece of *St. Basil's*. Or supposing that the Treatise it self be genuine (as I believe it is) it is very possible that some later Hand may have corrupted this Chapter, and have put in that long and tedious Digression, in which this Citation is contained. I cannot but take notice, that the Doctrine maintained in this place seems to be contradicted by *St. Basil*, in another place in that same Book, † where he tells his Adversaries, who alledg. † *Cap. 7.* ed the Fathers in their own behalf, that they did it falsely, and adds, "What our Ancestors said we say also—— Although this is not that which satisfies us, that it is the Tradition of our Fathers, for they herein followed the mind of the Scriptures. This I think does not at all agree with the Twenty-seventh Chapter of that Treatise; and I am confident, the Papists have not in all Antiquity a Testimony for Oral Traditions, which they value or use more than that. I am sure it looks very like that which *Tertullian* condemns in the Hereticks *: But let it be granted that the Passage is genuine, I then answer ;

I. That we need not wonder at the Titles and Encomiums which *St. Basil* gives this Usage, because it was very common for them to talk of their particular Customs as Apostolical : *St. Jerom's* † Advice is very remarkable to this purpose ; " That Ecclesiastical Traditions, especially those that are not against
" the

* *De Prae-
scrip. c. 25.*

† *Epist. ad
Lucin.*

“ the Faith, are to be observed as they were
 “ delivered to us by our Ancestors ; and that
 “ the Custom of one Country is not to be sub-
 “ verted by the contrary Custom of another---
 “ —But let every Country abound in its
 “ own Sense, and reckon the Precepts of
 “ their Ancestors Apostolical Laws. And to
 “ the same purpose are many Passages in St. Au-
 gustine †.

† Vide de
 Baptismo
 contra Don.
 lib. 2. c. 7.
 lib. 4. c. 24.
 lib. 5. c. 23.

2. St. Basil lived at too great a distance
 from the times of the Apostles, to be able to
 give us good Information what were Aposto-
 lical Laws or Traditions, about which the
 Orthodox in much earlier times could not a-
 gree among themselves, but put this speci-
 ous Name upon their different Sentiments :
 To which purpose, I will here set down the

* Not in E-
 pist. Cypri.
 ani, p. 219.

Remark of the Learned Bishop Fell, * “ That
 “ from the Controversy about the Baptism
 “ of Hereticks it appears, how easy it was
 “ for any Persons to make use of the pretence
 “ of Apostolical Traditions, since *Stephanus*
 “ and *Firmilianus*, the Patrons of the two
 “ opposite Opinions, did both of them with
 “ equal Assurance lay claim to it. And the
 same thing is evident, from another Instance
 mentioned by *Firmilian* in that Epistle upon
 which is this Note, and that is, the different
 Traditions that were pretended about the time
 of keeping *Easter*.

3. St. Basil, in the same place, gives this
 Venerable Title to the turning to the East
 when they pray'd, their Anointing with Oil,
 the Trine Immerfion ; and he tells us, That
 the reason why these things were handed
 down to them by unwritten Traditions, was

to maintain the Veneration of them, there being few that understood the reason of them ; as he tells us particularly, that they prayed toward the East, because of the Situation of the Garden of *Eden* : But (thanks be to God) we are now generally satisfied of the Vanity of such Pretences, and know that Ignorance is not the Mother of Devotion, and therefore cannot assent to such Doctrine as this : Nor can any stress be laid upon this Passage, without gratifying our common Enemy. The Church of *England* will as much wound themselves with it, as they will us : For St. *Basil* reckons, that such unwritten Traditions do as much concern Religion, and are of as good Authority as those that are written ; and therefore, since the Church does not practice all those Apostolical Laws that St. *Basil* talks of, they do censure themselves by alledging his Authority ; and let them consider, whether the Papists do not as well argue from this Testimony against them for Chrism, as they do against us for the Sign of the Cross. St. *Basil's* Words will not allow it to be an indifferent Ceremony (as Dr. *Hammond* †† De Confirmat. Oper. Vol. 4. p. 869. imagined it to be ;) and therefore the Church of *England* must necessarily come under his Censure : But though Dr. *Hammond* seems to speak in the Name of the Church in the place referred to, I hardly persuade my self that he speaks her Sense of the Matter. It is true, they retained Chrism in the first Edition of the Common-Prayer, in King *Edward* the VIth's Days ; but they

† *Exposit.*
of the 39
Art. p. 271.

* *Pag.* 132.

soon altered it in their second Edition before his Death. I do not see how the Primitive use of Chrism can be excused from being plainly Sacramental, and therefore unlawful: And of this Opinion (if I do not greatly mistake him) is my Lord of *Saram*, where he Discourses concerning Confirmation †, and I suppose our Author is of the same mind also: For though this is as ancient as any of those Customs which he * objects as used by the Primitive Christians, without any Jealousy of invading Christ's Prerogative in instituting new Sacraments, yet he takes no notice at all of it, because (as I imagine) he looked upon it as plainly Sacramental, and too gross to be vindicated.

4. I may also add, That *St. Basil* in this Passage does not expressly mention the Sign of the Cross in Baptism, but the common use of it. But,

5. This cannot be an Apostolical Tradition, because there is not the least evidence of any use of this Sign before *Tertullian*, (except perhaps among some Hereticks I shall have occasion to mention hereafter) that is, there is no mention of any such Rite as this in the two first and most pure Ages of Christianity. There is nothing of this Nature in *Clemens Romanus*, *Hermas*, *Barnabas*, *Ignatius*, or *Polycarpus*, &c. But it is most evident, that there was no such Custom in the Church some time before *Tertullian*, because *Justin Martyr* makes no mention of it: He several times mentions Baptism, but never this Ceremony annexed to

to it. In his second Apology to the Emperor, he explains the Customs of the Christians, and towards the latter end sets down a particular Account of their manner of Baptizing, which for the Reader's Satisfaction I will transcribe. " We will now (*says he*) P. M. 159.
 " relate in what manner we dedicate our
 " selves to God, being New-made by Christ,
 " least omitting this, we should be thought
 " to act unfairly in this Narration: As ma-
 " ny therefore as are persuaded, and do be-
 " lieve that the things which are taught and
 " said by us are true, and promise to live
 " accordingly, are taught to seek of God,
 " by Fasting and Prayer, the Forgiveness of
 " their past Sins, we also Fasting and Pray-
 " ing with them; then they are led to the
 " Water, where they are Regenerated, the
 " same way that we our selves were: For
 " they are Washed in the Name of God the
 " Father and Lord of all, and of Jesus Christ
 " our Saviour, and of the Holy Ghost. And
 then, after a pretty long Digression, he tells
 us, how they brought the Baptized Person
 to the Brethren, and Pray'd, &c. And then
 describes their manner of Celebrating the
 Lord's Supper. So that in his time, about
 Twenty or Thirty Years before *Tertullian*,
 Baptism was free from this, and from divers
 other Ceremonies, which *Tertullian* men-
 tions as joined to it. It is this most Pri-
 mitive Practice, and Native Simplicity of
 God's Ordinances, which we plead for.

† N. B. In the next place, St. Cyprian's Authority is produc'd, and we are told, That †
 Having fix-
 ed the rise
 of this Ce-
 remony to
 Tertullian's
 time, I have
 since the
 writing of
 these Pa-
 pers, met
 with two
 Passages
 that may
 seem to
 prove that
 it was in
 use before ;
 Of all the Fathers, St. Cyprian, who was
 before St. Basil, and very near, if not con-
 temporary with Tertullian himself, not only
 speaks very familiarly of the use of this Sign,
 but has some Expressions that would now seem
 harsh and unwarrantable, and yet the Autho-
 rity of this Father has saved him from being
 questioned about it.

Should it be supposed, that the Cross
 was used in Baptism in St. Cyprian's time,
 his Authority will be no more able to defend
 this
 use before ; and therefore, though I do not know that any one has
 ever alledged them in the behalf of the Cross, I have yet thought it
 might not be amiss to take notice of them to the Reader : They
 are both in the Acts of Thecla, published in the Learned Dr. Grabe's
Spicilegium Patrum, Part 1. p. 95. Which Acts are more ancient
 than Tertullian, as appears by his citing them, *Lib. de Baptismo*, cap.
 17. Nay, if his Testimony there may be relied upon, they are as
 old as the time of St. John. Now in the Greek Text, which Mr.
 Grabe has published, we find, that Thecla is said in two several
 places to have crossed her self, pag. 104. ἡ δὲ τὸν ἑαυτῆς ποινσα-
 μὲν ἐπέβη τὸν σταυρὸν, & p. 116. ἡ δὲ σταυρὸν καὶ σταυροῦσα μὲν ἔλον τὸ
 σῶμα αὐτῆς : But in answer to these I observe, that Dr. Grabe him-
 self does not deny, that these Acts are interpolated and corrupted,
 See pag. 94. Nay he owns, that the Greek Text may be mended
 in several places by the Old Latin Version, which he has published,
 See pag. 120. Now neither of these Passages are in this manner
 expressed in that Version. The first is only thus ; *At illa expansis*
manibus orabat ascendens super ligna, A Man with his Hands stretched
 out was with some of the Ancients the very shape of a Cross ;
 and therefore, the Corruptor thought without doubt that he did
 not alter the Sense, by substituting an Expression which seemed
 to him more pious. I wonder how the same kind of Expression
 escaped his Hands, when both Greek and Latin agree, see p. 111.
 & 125. As to the Second Passage ; besides that the Latin Version
 has nothing at all of it, the very Phrase of καὶ σταυροῦσα μὲν ἔλον τὸ
 σῶμα αὐτῆς, shews, that the Corruption must be long after even
 Tertullian's time.

this Practice, than it is that of Infant-Com-
munion, in which case our Adversaries take
the Liberty to reject it, and say that he is
not an Author Primitive enough to vouch
for it†. Nor is it fairly said, that his Au-
thority has saved him from being questioned
about his Expressions, when it is certain,
that the Learned *Parker* *, and others that
have written against the Cross, do blame
him, and several other later Fathers, for
what they say about it ; though it is true,
Tertullian being the first that mentions this
Sign, his Authority has been most confi-
dered.

† See Abr.
pag. 123.

* See part
1. pag. 77.
90, &
113, &c.

*He † tells us, that they are signed in the
Forehead with the Cross, that are thought
worthy of the Lord ; that Baptism is sanctifi-
ed by the Cross, and that it compleats every
Sacrament.*

† De Laps.
pag. 169.
adv. De-
metr. pag.
203. de U-
nit. p. 175.

And do these Expressions now only SEEM
to be harsh and unwarrantable ? Our Au-
thor must never expect to bring the *Dissen-
ters* to the same esteem of *St. Cyprian's* Au-
thority, that he has himself ; if it will save
him from being questioned by him, for such
Expressions as these. For my own part, I
should not scruple to condemn any one who
should use such Expressions, as grossly super-
stitious, and an Encourager of the present
Popish Superstition. It is not by *St. Cypri-
an's* Authority that I will defend my Faith
or Practice. I respect no Man's Person,
when he varies from the Rule I have to go
by. And if these are *St. Cyprian's* Expressi-
ons, and you do not question him about

them, Why are you satisfied that the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper should be *incompletely* administred in your Church? Why do you not use the Sign of the Cross in that Sacrament, as it was appointed in the first Edition of the Common-Prayer in King *Edward* the VIth's Days? If *Cyprian's* Authority be sufficient with you, you have as much reason to blame our first Reformers, for leaving it out in the Communion-Office, as we (who reject the Authority of all uninspired Persons in this Matter) think we have for the leaving it in the Office for Baptism. In short, *St. Cyprian* was a brave Man, and no good Christian can read his Works without a high Veneration of his great Holiness, Zeal, and most Christian Temper: But notwithstanding this, he had his blind side as well as other Men; and this Weakness is common to him, with some other very excellent Persons in the Primitive Church, that he had some simple Fancies about the Sign of the Cross: But that I may do him Justice, I am persuaded his Expressions are not so bad as our Author would represent them. The first Passage is indeed in his Treatise *De Unitate*, last mentioned in the Margin; where, speaking concerning the Judgment of God upon *Uzziah*, 2 *Chron.* 26. 29. he has these Words: "That the Lord being provoked, marked him in that part of the Body, in which they are marked that are thought worthy of the Lord (or that please the Lord.) The reason of this Expression of his need not be taken from the use

use of the Cross in Baptism, it may as well from the common use mentioned by *Terullian*; to which purpose is the Note of the Learned Bishop upon this place: But to say the truth, the reason of this, and some other of his Expressions of the like Nature, seems plainly to be no other, than that Interpretation which he more than once gives us of *Ezek. 9. 3, 4.* making the Mark that God set upon those that he would spare to be no other than a Cross. As to the other Expressions which our Author cites out of him, I cannot find them, though I have diligently examined the Treatises referred to in the Margin: And I am almost assured, that whoever will search into this matter, will find that our Author has not here acted with that Sincerity and Fairness that becomes a good Casuist; but has cited two genuine Pieces of *St. Cyprian* in the Margin, when the Passages themselves are not there, nor (I verily believe) in any of his genuine Works, but are to be met with in those Works that are unjustly fathered upon him, in which the Deceit is very evident: For as yet I have not met with any thing in *Cyprian*, that amounts to a Proof of their using this Ceremony in Baptism in his time.

The great Antiquity of this Usage is manifest.

This our Author thinks he has proved; but I must confess, I cannot as yet see any cause to recede from Mr. *Daille's* Opinion[†], ^{† De Cult. Lat. Relig.} That the Cross was never used in Baptism ^{pag. 63.} in the Three first Centuries: Nor have I

† Bever.
Cod. Can.
Illustr. in
Progm.

been as yet so happy, as to meet with any of those *Luculentissima Antiquitatis testimonia*, which a very Learned Bishop † tells us do contradict Mr. Daille's Assertion.

Nay, the Fathers frequently use being signed in the Forehead for being Baptized: I shall not instance in St. Cyril, St. Ambrose, and St. Austin, who sprinkle their Writings with the common mention of this Ceremony, and often times frame Arguments for a good Life, from this very Sign upon their Foreheads.

There is no need of any Testimonies of these later Fathers, we grant that it was used in their time. And as for the Arguments which they framed for a good Life from it, they are as cogent as some others of the like Nature, which we frequently meet with; as from the pure white Garments which a Person received at Baptism, &c. If they had had no better Arguments than these, they must have done much less good than they did.

Only I shall add this Remark, that the first Christian Emperor, Constantine the Great, had his Directions probably from Heaven itself, to make this Sign the Great Banner in his Wars, with this Incouragement, that by this he should Overcome: That this Dream or Vision was from Heaven, and a thing of great Reality, is evident from the Success of that Prince's Army under it.

I am very sensible of the Disadvantage of pleading against the Reality of that which so many Ecclesiastical Historians have attest-

attested ; and that a Man exposes himself to abundance of Odium, who will venture to question their Authority, and to examine a Matter that has so much vulgar Prejudice on its side : But I must confess, the Rule of our Faith being once fixed and confirmed by Miracles, and the Canon of the Holy Scriptures being once settled, I have very little Faith in the Visions and Miracles, which we meet with afterward, that countenance Rites and Ceremonies, of which we have not the least Footsteps in the Holy Scriptures themselves. I will not take upon me, to condemn every Vision which we meet with in ancient Authors ; but yet I make no doubt, more are pretended than really happened ; and that which perhaps had some Reality in it, was often so improved and amplified, that we know not now what to make of it. It is a very cunning way to incourage and animate Soldiers, to persuade them the Victory is foretold and promised them by God himself, and is therefore certain to them. Such Visions therefore were frequently pretended before any great Action, or at least the Historians do often introduce the Story of any great Victory with some such Preface : Thus *Constantine* the Great (if we may believe *Nicephorus Callistus* †) had another Vision, and looking up to † Lib. 7. Heaven saw the Stars formed into Letters, cap. 47. expressing these Words, *Call upon me in the day of trouble, and I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me.* Though it is certain, that no Vision was necessary to teach *Constantine*

stantine this Lesson, when he might have learned it from the 50th *Psalm*, ver. 13. And as though the Vision alledged by our Author had not been sufficient for *Constantine*, we are told by the same Historian, that looking up to Heaven, he saw a Cross with this Inscription, *With this Sign thou shalt overcome all thine Enemies*. So again, we meet with the appearance of a Cross, to portend Victory to *Constantius*, Junior, over *Magnentius*, mentioned by several Ecclesiastical Historians. So *Licinius* is taught by an Angel a Form of Prayer, and is promised the Victory if he used it, as it is related by *Lactantius* †; though it is certain, *Licinius* was no Friend in his Heart to the Christian Cause; but he had not discovered himself when that Treatise of *Lactantius* was written, and therefore his Pretence of a Vision was more easily credited by *Lactantius*, tho' it lost its Credit after that *Licinius* had pulled off the Mask, and appeared to be an Enemy; and therefore, all the Christian Writers who wrote after that, make no mention hereof, though no doubt, if he had continued as firm and hearty in the Christian Cause as *Constantine* did, this pretended Vision would have been handed down to us with as much care, and as many Encomiums as the other of *Constantine*. There is too much truth in those Words of the Learned Bishop *Fell* *; "That it is not to be denied, that the Liberty of Counterfeiting, and the Forwardness of Believing, were so great in the first Ages of the Church, that

† De Mor-
tib. Persec.
cap. 46.

* *Monitio*
ad Lect. ad
calc. op. cyp.
pag. 53.

" that the Credit of Matters of Fact is much
 " lessened thereby ; so that not only the
 " World, but the Church has reason to com-
 " plain of her fabulous times. And I fear,
 that there are so many Presumptions against
 this Story, which is related by Ecclesiasti-
 cal Historians, as the means of *Constantine's*
 Conversion, that it will be able to yield but
 little Assistance to the Advocates for the Sign
 of the Cross ; and that the Reader may not
 be too severe in censuring my Boldness, or
 think that it is only Partiality to my own
 Opinion that is the reason why I suspect this
 Story, he may take notice I am not the first
 that have been suspicious of it. *Jacobus*
Gothofredus, † a very Learned Lawyer, and † *Vid. Not*
 no ways interessed in any such Controversy *in Philost.*
 as this, has gone before me, and has with a *ad lib. 1.*
 great deal of Learning shewn what credit it *cap. 6.*
 deserves, out of whom I shall take leave to
 borrow what seems to my purpose, and shall
 add what I have my self farther observed
 concerning it.

1. Then (as he observes) although the
 Banner that *Constantine* so successfully used
 is mentioned, yet never do we find the least
 mention of this appearance of the Cross in
 any of the Heathen Writers : Nay, *Gelasius*
Cyzicenus is so honest in relating this Story,
 as to tell us, * that the Heathen did uni- * *Aff. Conc.*
 versally esteem it a Fable, contrived for the *nic. lib. 1.*
 gaining the more Reputation to Christia- *cap. 4.*
 nity.

2. The

† Lib. 1.
cap. 1.

* Four Dis-
courses, pref.
pag. 34.

† Biblioth.
cod. 127.
pag. 306,
307.

2. The chief Foundation of this Story is a Panegyrick : The other Historians do generally cite as their Voucher, *Eusebius's* Life of *Constantine* ; and in Panegyricks it is usual to amplify Matters, and to make the most of them ; and therefore *Socrates*, tho' he follows *Eusebius* in this Story, yet says of him, † that in writing the Life of *Constantine*, he was more careful in setting down his Praises, than in giving an exact Relation of Matters. The Learned Bishop of *Sarum* makes the same Remark, who upon another Occasion is pleased to use these Words concerning him ; * “ I confess, we ought not to take it singly from *Eusebius*, “ for he is rather a perpetual Encomiast of “ *Constantine*, than his Historian : And the same Opinion had the Learned *Photius* † of him. Does it not look a little suspicious, that we should meet with nothing of this Story in *Eusebius's* Ecclesiastical History ? Such Stories do easily spread themselves far and near, especially when they are in favour of that Party that has the Ascendent over its Rival. Such a Story as this, if it had been true, must have been universally known among Christians, or without doubt must have reached as far as *Cæsarea* in Twelve Years time ; and so long it was between the pretended time of this Vision, and the Death of *Licinius*, at which *Eusebius* ends his History : And yet it is plain, *Eusebius* knew nothing of it when he wrote his History, because (though he had occasion enough) yet he never mentions it therein. And is it not

not very strange, this Story should be hid from so eminent and inquisitive a Person as *Eusebius*? and that he should be able to give us no account of it, when he was writing the History of the very time and Battle at which this is pretended to have happened? Is it likely, that not only *Constantine*, but his Army too which saw this Vision with him, should industriously conceal it? Or if they did not, that it should never come to *Eusebius's* Ears? This, I confess, is to me a Presumption, that the Story was trumped up afterward: And I am the more confirmed herein, by what we meet with in *Eusebius's* History, viz. an Account of *Constantine's* Statue, which he erected at Rome, after the Victory he obtained over *Maxentius*, which held a Cross in its Right-hand, and upon which he tells us, † the Emperor himself ordered an Inscription, declaring, *That by this salutary Banner (the Cross) he had freed their City from the Yoke of Tyrannical Government.* Doubtless, if he had then known any thing of this Story, he would have told us likewise how *Constantine* came by this Banner. But I need not insist upon this, since *Eusebius's* own Account seems to imply, that he knew nothing at all of this Matter, till he had the Honour to be himself acquainted with the Emperor *. So that if the Reader will bear with a Conjecture, I will offer one which, I think, is not void of all Probability. There were, at the time when this Vision is pretended to have happened, no less than Four who shared the Empire,

† H. E. lib. 9. c. 9.

* Vid. Vit. Const. lib. 1. cap. 28.

† Euf. H.
E: *ibid.*

Empire, or who (if you will) were Competitors for the whole of it. The Christians were no despicable Party at this time, but were very numerous through the whole Empire, as we may see by a Letter of *Maximian* † their Enemy, and *Constantine's* Rival, and by the Indulgence which both he and *Licinius* were forced to grant the Christians for their own Security. Now nothing was ever like to be so advantageous for the setting *Constantine* above the rest of his Rivals, as his engaging in his Interest so strong and numerous a Party as the Christians every where were; who, by reason of the desperate Hardships they groaned under, would most gladly behold an approaching Deliverance, and with a desperate Courage contend for it.

A little matter of Policy then would teach a Man in *Constantine's* Circumstances (especially considering his Education, of which afterward) to use his best Endeavours to secure their most hearty Affection: And therefore to speak freely, he seems to me to have chosen the Banner of the Cross, because he knew from the ordinary Practice of the Christians (who were abundantly superstitious in this matter) that it would make him very acceptable to them; and afterwards to set a better Gloss upon his Practice, and perhaps out of a Zeal also to promote Christianity, he seems to have devised this pious Fraud, if it be one. It is certain, that some of his other Actions will not bear a strict Scrutiny; and it is not improbable, that his
Opinion

Opinion concerning Baptism, and his delaying it to the end of his Life, might occasion his not acting in every thing like a thorough Casuist, hoping to wash away all at last.

3. There is not a perfect Harmony in the Accounts of all that relate the Story: Here I might observe, with reference to the Motto that *Gelasius Cyzicenus* says it was †, *τὸν ὄψιν*, upon which *Balsoreus* notes, that there is undoubtedly wanting the Particle *ἐν*, which he tells us is prefixed by all those that mention the Story: But therein he is grossly mistaken, for though *Socrates*, *Sozomen*, *Philostorgius*, and some others have it, yet *Eusebius* himself, the great Pattern of the Story, leaves it out.

† *Ad. S.*
Conc. Nic.
lib. 1. c. 4.

Again, *Philostorgius* *, and from him I suppose † *Nicephorus Callistus*, say it was in *Latin*, of which I remember not the least hint in any of the rest. *Eusebius* says, the Letters of the Motto were ranked about the Cross, to which *Philostorgius* and *Nicephorus* add, they were formed of Stars; and the first says they ran about the Cross like a Rainbow; and the Author in *Photius* * says the Cross and Letters were formed by immaterial Light; whereas *Sozomen*, who makes more than any of the rest of this Story, tells us, that when he first saw this Sign, the Holy Angels standing by him said, O Constantine, in this Overcome.

* *Lib. 1.*
cap. 6.
† *Lib. 7.*
cap. 29.

* *Biblioth.*
numb. 256.
pag. 1407.

Again, there is not a perfect Agreement about the time when this happened. *Eusebius* places it before his engaging *Maxentius*, and

and both he and *Nicephorus* make him to be in a Journey: But *Philostorgius* says, that his Victory over *Maxentius* was the occasion of his Conversion, and that he saw this Vision about that time; whereas the Author in † *De Mort. Photius* and *Lactantius* † place it after the *persec. cap.* first Battle with *Maxentius*, in which *Maxentius* got the better. 44.

Again *Eusebius* says, this Cross was placed over the Sun, and that he saw it in the Afternoon, and consequently he must see it where the Sun then was, in the South or South-West, and the later you place the Vision, the more Westerly it must be. With *Eusebius* agrees *Nicephorus* as to the time, and *Zonaras* makes it in the middle of the Day. Now what can be more contrary to this, than that he should see it in the East, which yet is asserted by *Philostorgius* and *Nicephorus Callistus*.

But the chief Difference that I insist upon, is in the Account of the thing it self: We have Three Authors that relate this Story, that lived in *Constantine's* time; but they do not any two of them agree, whether it were a Dream or a Vision only, or both. The Author I mentioned in *Photius* lived in this time, and he makes it to be only a Vision, and with him agree *Philostorgius*, and *Gelasius Cyzic*. *Lactantius*, who lived at Court, and was Tutor to *Constantine's* Son, (and should therefore, one would think, have as perfect knowledge of the Story as any Man) makes it only a * Dream (which perhaps may be the bottom of the Story, 44.

Story, the Addition of the Vision, and the other Improvements, being probably made after he was Dead) whereas *Eusebius* says he had first a Vision, then a Dream in which Christ appeared to him, shewed him the Sign, and bad him make another like to it, &c. and *Sozomen* (as I observed before) prefixes to both these another Vision, with the Apparition of Angels, saying, O Constantine, *in this Overcome*. And because of this very material Difference, our Author styles it a Dream or Vision, because he did not know which to make of it.

4. It seems to me some Presumption against the Reality of this Story, that God does not work Miracles for converting Persons, but upon very extraordinary Occasions. My meaning is, that he does not use to work Miracles to convert Persons, where the ordinary and common Methods may be supposed sufficient. The blind furious Zeal of St. Paul (who was designed for eminent Service) occasioned God to recede from his ordinary Methods, and in order to the overcoming those Prejudices which rendered him averse to the use of the Ordinary Means, he calls him by a Voice from Heaven, and surprises him (not with a Cross but) with a Light above that of the Sun. But I conceive, *Constantine's* Case was very different. We have no reason to believe, that he was possessed of any such mighty Prejudices against Christianity: Nay, according to *Eusebius's* own Account, he was prejudiced against Paganism (which was to him the on-

ly Rival of Christianity) and that because of the Unsuccessfulness of the preceding Emperors, who had been the most violent Zealots for it. Some have asserted, that his Mother *Helena* was a Christian long before; which if it were certain, would much strengthen this Argument: But I lay no stress upon it, because I know not of any good Authority for it, and I think that *Eusebius* is express † against it: But however, † *Vit. Const. lib. 3. c. 47.* since his own Father was a very great Favourer at least of the Christians, and chose them for his Courtiers, it is almost impossible that *Constantine's* Education should not possess him with a favourable Opinion of Christianity, and render a Miracle needless in order to his Conversion. If we could indeed believe the Account that is given of *Constantine* by the Authors of the Famous Donation, viz. that he had been at first a Persecuter of the Christians, this Argument would fall. But it is certain that Account is false. *Eusebius* * assures us, that from his first being made Emperor, he testified the same Affection to Christianity, that his Father had done. *Lactantius* || also assures us, That upon his first being made Emperor, he gave Liberty to the Christians; to which agrees the Author in *Photius*, who tells us, That *Constantine* was instructed by his Father in the Christian Religion. — And that *Constantius* declared upon his Death-bed, when his Son *Constantine* was Arrived to see him, That Death was more pleasant to him than Life, since he should leave behind him such

* *H. E. lib. 8. cap. 13.* *Eusebius* * assures us, that from his first being made Emperor, he testified the same Affection to Christianity, that his Father had done.

|| *De Mort. persec. cap. 24. de falsa Relig. c. 1.* *Lactantius* || also assures us, That upon his first being made Emperor, he gave Liberty to the Christians; to which agrees the Author in *Photius*, who tells us, That

Constantine was instructed by his Father in the Christian Religion. — And that *Constantius* declared upon his Death-bed, when his Son *Constantine* was Arrived to see him, That Death was more pleasant to him than Life, since he should leave behind him

such

such an Emperor (*Constantine*) that should wipe the Tears from the Christians Eyes, and put a stop to the Persecutions of *Maximianus*.

To this I know it will be objected, That the Conversion of an Emperor to the Christian Faith was a Matter of that Importance to it, that it may be justly reckoned an extraordinary Occasion, and such as might fairly require a Miracle ; and that God might single out this particular Miracle, for the more effectual removing of those Prejudices that were common in the Minds of Heathens against it.

In answer to this Objection, I do readily grant, That it was indeed of great Importance to Christianity to gain the Throne ; but I conceive, the Ease and Tranquility of Christians would be the same, whether the Emperor's Conversion were wrought with or without a Miracle ; and therefore, since the Ordinary Means may be supposed sufficient without a Miracle for his Conversion, this part of the Objection is answered already : And therefore, as to the other part of the Objection, that this might be a good Means to remove the common Prejudice of the Heathens against the Cross ; I answer, That if this had been true, it might have had this Effect ; but I imagine, it would almost necessarily have had another Effect, which I hardly believe the Blessed God would by such a Miracle have occasioned : My meaning is, that it would have been a Confirmation of those ungrounded Imagina-

tions that were common among Christians (before *Constantine's* time) of the great Vertue of the Sign of the Cross ; and that it would have been a Pattern and Rule for the setting up material Crosses, and ascribing Vertue to them ; and indeed that Effect, it is plain, this Story in a great measure had. To this I may add, that when Miracles have been wrought, it has been in such a convincing way, that the very Adversaries of the Truth have not been able to deny the Matter of Fact, but have found themselves obliged to seek out other Evasions ; but he that will seek for this in this Miracle, will I fear be at a loss ; for as no Heathen Writer grants, to the Heathens (as I observed before out of *Gelasius Cyzicenus*) universally denied the Matter of Fact, which yet could hardly have been, had it been wrought (according to the Story) before the whole Army, in which were doubtless abundance of Heathens, some of whom (if this were the Design) would have been Converted by it, and have attested it ; and the whole Credit of the Story would not have rested upon the single Testimony of *Constantine*, which is not much helped by the Addition of *Artemius*, who is brought in by *Simeon Metaphrastes* and *Sarius*, as an Eye-witness of this Miracle ; though in several Ages after it was wrought, we hear nothing of his Testimony.

5. This common Account of *Constantine's* Conversion cannot be true, if he was a professed Christian before the time of this pretended Vision ;

Vision; and that he was indeed a Christian before is not only asserted by *Sozomen*, but such a notable Argument is alledged by him in the proof of it, that I do not see how it can be easily evaded. He tells us most expressly †, that in *France, Britain, and the* † *Lib. 1. cap. 5.* Parts of the World thereabout, *Constantine* had embraced the Christian Faith before he had War with *Maxentius*, or came to *Rome* or *Italy*; and he adds, that the Laws he made in favour of the Christian Religion do fully prove it. Now this utterly overthrows the Account given by *Eusebius*, that just before this Vision, *Constantine* was deliberating with himself, What God he should address himself to, and chuse as the Patron of his Cause, and at last resolving to intreat the supreme God, that he would reveal himself to him, and help him: And *Sozomen* himself does indeed give us a hint of this, which certainly does no way agree with his own Account, that he had embraced the Christian Faith long before. Nor can *Sozomen* be brought off by alledging that he tells us *, that many things concurred to make a Convert of *Constantine*, and particularly this Vision of the Cross; for if *Constantine* were not a Convert before this Vision, would not only *Sozomen's* Assertion in the Fifth Chapter be false, but his whole Argument would be impertinent. * *Lib. 1. cap. 3.*

6. There is another Circumstance in *Eusebius*, which with me does not add much Credit to the Story, and that is, that after (upon his Prayer to the supreme God,

Constantine had obtained this Vision of the Banner of the Cross with this Motto, *In this Overcome*, he was in suspense about the meaning of it, till that at Night Christ appeared to him in a Dream to discover it to him. He that does but consider, what the general Practice of the Christians was at this time, and how common the use of this Sign among them was, will (I imagine) conclude that the first Vision, if true, was sufficiently plain, and needed not such an Interpreter. The Cross of Christ was reckoned a Matter of so much Glory by all Christians, and of so much Reproach by *Jews* and *Pagans*, that it was next to impossible for a Man to have heard any thing of Christianity, and yet to have been ignorant of the manner of Christ's Death; and it being the general Custom of Christians at that time to sign themselves on all Occasions with the Sign of the Cross, *Constantine* must doubtless have seen it made a Thousand times in his Father's Court; and if *Sozomen's* Account were true, it is a little strange that the Angel that said to him, O *Constantine in this Overcome*, should not so explain it as to render all farther Interpretation needless. But it is farther to be observed, that the Christians did then ascribe great Vertue to the sign of the Cross, and that they used it as a Fence against all Dangers, as abundance of Testimonies prove, and this likewise *Constantine* could not well be ignorant of. We must suppose him to have been a Person, who had not the least Drachm of humane

Curio-

Curiosity, never once to have enquired, when he saw the Christians crossing themselves, what was the meaning of that usage; and upon the least Enquiry he would have been immediately informed either by Heathens or Christians. The Heathens had been indeed so scandalized by this their Practice, that they thought they worshipped the Cross; whence the Heathen in *Minucius Felix* tells the Christians, † that they worshipped what they deserved, meaning the Cross. This was occasioned, I suppose, by the use they made of the Sign, and the vertue they ascribed to it; though the Christians denied, that they worshipped the Cross, as we may see in the other part of that Dialogue *. It seems plain therefore, that *Constantine* might by the first Vision easily understand, that he was to use such a Sign as that was which appeared to him in the Heavens, and that by vertue of it he was to conquer his Enemies: And therefore I confess, the Story seems to me better laid by the Author in *Photius*, who supposes the Vision plain enough of it self, and does not with *Eusebius* introduce Christ afterward interpreting it to *Constantine* in a Dream.

7. *Eusebius* tells us, that when *Constantine* saw this Vision, his whole Army saw it with him; and yet he tells us, that when he gave him an account of it, he confirmed it with his Oath. Perhaps some will think, that such a Confirmation is a full Proof of the truth of this Story: But yet, I think, the World is apt to suspect Persons that are over forward in swear-

† Ut id colunt quod merentur, P. M. 28.

* Cruces nec colimus nec optamus. p. 89.

ing : And it seems to me, that here was not that special Occasion for his swearing in private Conversation, viz. to attest a Matter of Fact, of which according to his own Account, he had so many Eye-witnesses. Methinks it would have been much more to his purpose to have appealed to the Testimony of those that saw the Vision with him. And *Eusebius* would have given us better Assurance of the Truth of this Story, if according to his usual Diligence, he had made a farther Enquiry into the Emperor's Army, had found out some of the Eye-witnesses, and left us upon Record some of their Attestations : But the want of such Evidence as this, seems to me to have made *Eusebius* jealous of the Story, and this gave Occasion to *Constantine* to give that Confirmation. To this purpose I understand *Eusebius*, when he tells us, " That upon the
 " Emperor's Prayer to God, He was pleased
 " to afford him a most strange and wonder-
 " ful Sign, which it would be hard to be-
 " lieve, if it had been related by any body
 " else ; but since the Emperor himself rela-
 " ted it to me (who now write the Histo-
 " ry) a long time afterward, when he
 " vouchsafed me the Honour of his particu-
 " lar Acquaintance, and confirmed it with
 " his Oath ; Who will hereafter make any
 " scruple of believing this Story ? Upon
 the whole, I think we have reason to sus-
 pend at least our Judgments, since we have
 but one Witness, and that in a Matter that
 may seem much to concern his own Reputa-
 tion ;

tion ; and since it is in the Mouth of Two or Three Witnesses that every Word shall be established ; and since the World is now convinced, that ~~that~~ one Witness is not a Person of so compleat a Character as *Eusebius* would represent him to be ; but his Life and Reign had very great Blemishes, upon which I care not to enlarge ; and indeed, Christianity has been so much indebted to him, that it is but decent to cover and excuse them as much as we can : And if any thing seems contrary to this in what has been said, the Reader must not lay the blame upon me, but upon him that by alledging such Proofs, does render it necessary to consider the ground of them.

Thus far concerning the Reality of the Story ; which, I think, we cannot, with *Eusebius* and our Author, argue from the Success of that Prince's Army under it ; because there is too much reason to suspect, that the Story was mostly contrived after the Experiment had been made of the success of this Banner.

But, however, to pleasure our Author, let us suppose this a thing of great Reality ; let us suppose that it were liable to no such Objections, as have been already alledged, and let us see what use he can make of it : He thinks then, that this is a good Testimony of our Lord's Approbation of the Sign of the Cross.

We cannot (says he) suppose, that our Blessed Lord would, by so immediate a Revelation, countenance such a Rite as this already
dy

dy used in the Church, if he had resented it before as superstitious, or any way unwarrantable.

Our Author here plainly acquits all the Christians before *Constantine's* time of all Superstition, and vouches every thing in their use of this Sign to be warrantable ; and yet I cannot think that a good Protestant, or a true Son of the Church can upon sober Consideration, and consistently with his own Principles do so. I desire the Reader only to look back upon what I have cited out of *Tertullian*, and what our Author has given us for *Cyprian's*, and then let him judge, Whether he has prudently passed this Judgment upon their Doctrine and Practice. The Church of *England* is against frequent Crossing, nor has she as yet declared in any of her Articles, &c. that she ascribes such vertue to the Cross, as to make it *sanctify Baptism, and compleat every Sacrament*, which yet our Author assures us, is asserted by *Cyprian*, and about which he thinks not fit to question him : Nay, he thinks all these Opinions and Expressions, with abundance more, are to be received by us as Truths revealed, and miraculously confirmed to us from Heaven ; though, nevertheless, when he finds it more to his purpose in the latter end of the Chapter, he sticks not to acknowledge, that Baptism is compleat without the Sign of the Cross. Our Author in the next Page condemns visible Crucifixes : I cannot tell whether he does visible Crosses also, which are one part of

of them. If he does, this Discourse of his makes much against himself; and does notoriously countenance them, and the Opinion of some special Vertue which, through the Divine Blessing, attends the use of them; for, according to our Author, here was an immediate Revelation and Direction from God for the making of them (*and not the transient Sign of the Cross in the Air*) and the expecting Help and Aid from God by them; and to speak freely, I believe, that no doubt is made by those that consider things impartially (I mean all but the Church of *Rome*, whose Interest makes some of them endeavour to think otherwise) that it was at this time that the Practice of setting up Material Crosses had its beginning; that which *Constantine* set up I mentioned before, and we meet with many more after this time.

But farther, many that believe this Story to be true, have thought the Cross had little to do in it any farther, than as the *Greek* Letter χ , the first of Christ's Name, was the Figure of a Cross. Learned Men have shewn, that the Form of *Constantine's* Banner was, ✝ or ✞ that is, X and P, the two first Letters of the Name $\chi\rho\iota\varsigma\tau\omicron\varsigma$. This is evident from ancient Coins $\dagger$, and indeed from the Authors $\ast$ that relate the Story: But the Story will most certainly better vouch for visible material Crosses, than for the use of the Sign of the Cross in Baptism.

$\dagger$ See Onuf.
Panvin. lib.
2. com. in
fast.

$\ast$ Euj. Vit.
Const. lib.
1. cap. 31.
Lañ. de
Mort. per.
c. 44. Nic.
Call. lib. 7.

I cap. 29. &c.

*I may add, that we ought not to be too pe-
culant against that, which the Holy Spirit has
sometimes signalized by very renowned Mira-
cles, as those that consult Ecclesiastical Hi-
storians of the best Authority cannot but be
convinced*

This Remark of our Author's is liable to
the same Objections with the former. I
need not therefore give a particular Answer
to it. The Reader may (if he please) here
apply the Observation of the Learned Bi-
shop Fell, which I cited before, which to
me is no small Confirmation of the Predi-
ction of the Apostle, 2 *Thes.* 2. 9. When our
Author is more particular in his Instances,
I may perhaps be so in my Answer; but
indeed, he seems not himself heartily to be-
lieve those pretended Miracles, though he
would amuse his Reader with them; this I
guess from his following Words, *viz.*

*And those Conceits of the Fathers concer-
ning this Sign, which perhaps may be too
fanciful, do confirm the ancient Reception of
it in the Primitive Church.*

By which Words (I imagine) our Au-
thor would evade the Charge of a very ab-
surd Credulity, which might have been o-
therwise grounded upon his former Words.
It is not in Debate, Whether this Sign was
in use in the time of those later Fathers,
who are here designed; we grant it, but
reckon not that Primitive enough to warrant
our Use of it.

But

But since the *Abridgement* mentions the Miracles of the Cross, without descending to Particulars, I will here take the Liberty to instance in one of its miraculous Vertues, which the Author of the Case seems to believe; and indeed it is such an one as has many a *Probatum est* in the ancient Writers.

And 'tis this † that it is a most terrible scourge to the Devil, and most effectual to drive him away. And a Learned Person tells us, “ * That when a Divine Vertue was fancied to accompany that Ritual Action, it was used in Baptism as a sort of Incantation; for with the use of it the Devil was adjured to go out of the Person to be Baptized: And *Bellarmino* has attempted to explain this Vertue of it; || and one reason of its Vertue he makes to be the Apprehensions and Thoughts of the Devil about it, and tells us, “ That the Devil undoubtedly, when he sees the Sign of the Cross, remembers that he was conquered by the Cross of Christ; and therefore is afraid of that Sign of his Calamity, and runs away just as a Dog does at the sight of a Cudgel. But I confess, I have no Opinion of this strange Vertue of the Sign of the Cross, and do believe that the Devil has too much Courage to be so easily scared: Nay, I think I have reason to believe, that the Devil himself, upon occasion, does not scruple the use of this Sign; and that he can do a great deal more mischief with this Sign to them that use it, than they can do to him by it. I will give the Reader here

† *Epiph. her. 30. § 8. 10. 12. Euseb. Orat in laud. Const. c. 6. 9, &c. Sozom. lib. 5. c. 2. Last. de Mortib. pers. c. 10. Inst. lib. 4. cap. 27. Theodorit. Hist. lib. 3. cap. 3. Naz. Orat. cont. Julianum. * Bishop Burnet 4 Discours. p. 291. || Contr. de Sacram. lib. 2. c. 31 p. m. 257.*

† Sennert.
Med. pract.
lib. 6. p.
794.

here some Passages to this purpose, from a very remarkable Story related by Dr. *Balthasar Han*, in a Letter to *Sennertus*, who has printed it in his Works†. The Story is as fruitful a Soil for Remarks, as that which we have been told concerning *Constantine*. The Doctor relates it from his own Knowledge and Observation, and it is briefly this; That in *November, A. C. 1634.* an honest pious Woman (commended by the Doctor in particular for her using the Sign of the Holy Cross) was most dreadfully Bewitched, had blue Spots made in her Flesh, and a multitude of Crosses together, with these Letters N. B. and was troubled with sad Fits; — That afterward she had more Crosses made in her Flesh, and the Characters that are used by Astronomers and Chymists; — That in *January* following, besides new Crosses, and several other things, there was a Fool very artificially pictured, with the *German Word Narr*, (which signifies a Fool) written at length.

I don't pretend to much Understanding in Hieroglyphicks; but I think a Man without an *Oedipus* may interpret these, and therefore will leave every one to do it as he sees cause. Only to balance Accounts with our Author, I will add this Remark, That if he thinks that God warranted this Sign for that purpose to which it was formerly used, to terrify the Devil, he has here the Devil's Warrant that he will not be offended at it; that if of Old this Sign had indeed such a wonder-working Vertue, and

was

was so effectual a Terror to the Devil, it is plain that Miracles being long since ceased, this Sign has now lost that Vertue, and the Devil is not in the least offended at it. And that therefore there can no Prejudice or Detriment accrue to Protestants, by wholly laying aside the use of it.

If it be said, that the ancient Christians used this Sign, because they lived among Jews and Heathens, to testify to both, that they made the Cross the Badge of their Profession, and would not be ashamed of it, though it was a Stumbling-block to the one, and Foolishness to the other; whereas we have no occasion for it who universally profess Christianity.

Before I consider the Answer that is given to this Objection, I shall, with the good leave of my Reader, a little more particularly inquire into the Original of this Sign, and shall the rather do it in this place, because our Author seems to take this to be a true Account of the Rise of it; wherein he follows the Convocation, who tell us, That " the Honour and Dignity of the
 " Name of the Cross, begat a Reverend E-
 " stimation, even in the Apostles time (for
 " ought that is known to the contrary) of
 " the Sign of the Cross, which the Christi-
 " ans shortly after used in all their Actions,
 " thereby making an outward Shew and
 " Profession, even to the Astonishment of
 " the Jews, That they were not ashamed
 " to acknowledge him for their Lord and
 " Saviour, who died for them upon the
 " Cross:

“ Cross : And this Sign they did not only
 “ use themselves with a kind of Glory,
 “ when they met with any *Jews*, but sign-
 “ ed therewith, &c. I will not deny, that
 some of the later Fathers, particularly *St.*
Austin and *St. Cyril*, do give us some such
 Hints, that herein the Christians had a Re-
 gard to their Enemies, and designed to te-
 stify to them by this Usage, their Respect
 to their Crucified Lord. This Sign might
 be so used by them in their time ; but if
 they thought that this was the true Ac-
 count of its first Rise, or that it was thus
 used at first, with a humble Submission I
 conceive they were mistaken. I hope I may
 now, from what has been already said, be
 allowed to suppose, that this Sign came first
 into use about *Tertullian's* time ; and since
 it is from him that we have the first Ac-
 count of it, we may certainly form a better
 Conjecture concerning the true occasion of
 it from what he says of it, than from what
 is said by those who lived a considerable
 time after him. Now it is most evident,
 that in *Tertullian's* time this Sign was not
 used upon this pretended reason, but be-
 cause of the Vertue which they fancied to
 attend it : For by what I have already cited
 out of *Tertullian* it appears, that they used
 to cross themselves, when it could signify
 nothing at all to *Jews* or *Heathens*. If
 they did it only upon the account of such,
 to what purpose was it for them to cross
 themselves when they put on their Shoes or
 Clothes, when they went out or came in,
 when

when they went to Table or to Bed ? We must suppose the Christians to have been much more familiar with *Jews* and *Heathens* than is commonly imagined, if they were present with them on all these Occasions. Briefly, their crossing themselves in Private, appears at least as old as their crossing themselves in Publick ; and since in Private it could not be upon any such reason, I conclude that this Account of its Original is not probable : Nay, I am persuaded, that whosoever will impartially read the Fifth Chapter of *Tertullian's* second Book to his Wife † will be convinced, that in his time they were not so open in their use of this Sign, and were so far from designing by it to bear their Testimony either to *Jews* or *Heathens*, that they did it clandestinely when they were present, endeavouring to conceal from them what they did, being unwilling to cast such a Pearl as this before Swine, least they should trample it under their Feet, and turn again and rend them, as *Tertullian* there applies that Text to this purpose. If therefore they by this designed to bear their Testimony to *Jews* and *Heathens*, it could not be at its first Rise ; but some time after, when the *Jews* and *Heathens* had observed and taken notice of them, and indeed considering how frequently they used this Sign, it could not be long before they would be discovered, whatever care they used to hide it ; and perhaps, when their Enemies began to reproach them for

† See also
Cap. 8.

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this,

this, they might then use it with a kind of Glory, &c.

I am the more jealous of this Account of the Original of this Sign, because it seems to me injurious to the Primitive Christians, of whose mild and peaceable Behaviour we have good Assurance: It carries in it a base Reflection upon them, as Persons of a most litigious Temper, and uncivil Deportment; for if upon all those Occasions wherein they used to cross themselves, they did it in Opposition to those that were not of their mind, and that without any Provocation from them, they must have been Persons of such a Character, and have had but little regard to those excellent Rules of the Apostle, † to give no Offence, either to Jew or Gentile; to follow Peace with all Men; and if it be possible, as much as in us lieth, to live peaceably with all Men. I cannot but think, that a much more probable Account may be given of the way by which this Sign was introduced; and I wonder it has not been alledged, since it seems very obvious to any Man, that considers the strain of the ancient Writers.

The Doctrine of the Cross (or of Salvation through Christ crucified) was to the Jews a Stumbling-block, and to the Greeks Foolishness: It was a great Prejudice in the Minds of both, which hindered their embracing of Christianity, and with which as the most material Objection they endeavoured to cramp the Christians. This ren-

† 1 Cor. 10.
32.
Heb. 12.
14.
Rom. 12.
18.

dred

33. r

dred it absolutely necessary, that the Christians should be especially careful to defend themselves in this Point; and accordingly, all those that write in defence of Christianity, take particular notice of this Objection, and endeavour to remove the Offence which both *Jews* and *Heathens* took at the Cross. It cannot be denied, that this occasioned them to be guilty of great Extravagance, while, according to the Genius of those times, they set themselves to look out for abundance of Resemblances and Types of the Cross. Their earnest desire of discovering a Cross in every thing, made every thing they looked upon appear to them in the shape of a Cross; just as painted Glasses, or the Humours of the Eyes discoloured by a Distemper, will make every thing seen through them appear of the same colour with themselves. Thus *Justin Martyr* † answers the *Jew* who made this Objection, by alledging Prefigurations of the Cross, and makes *Moses's* praying with his Hands lifted up to be typical of the Cross, because Christ's Hands (as he thought) were stretched out just in the same manner upon the Cross; and in this Fancy (one of the best) *Barnabas* * went before him, and he is followed by *Tertullian* ||, *Cyprian* †, and several others. Again, *Justin* makes the Horn of an Unicorn, or *Rhinoceros*, to be a Sign of the Cross; and to this purpose he screws the Words of *Moses*, where the Horns of Unicorns are mentioned, *Deut.* 33. 17. *Tertullian*, and several others,

† *Dial. P.*
M. 93.

* *Epist. c.*
12.
|| *Adv. Ju-*
da. c. 14.
adv. Marc.
lib. 3. c. 18.
† *Adv. Ju-*
da. lib. 2.
c. 21.

give the same Interpretation, and it is great odds, when the Word Horn comes in their way, that they bring in the *Cornua Crucis*.

† *Apol.* 2.

To make sure work of all, *Justin* † tells us, That no Business in the World is done, but you may observe this Figure ; as in Sailing, Plowing, Digging, &c. That it is the Figure of a Cross that puts a difference between a Man and a Beast, because a Man's Body is strait, and he can stretch out his Hands ; and this Figure he observes in a Man's Face, being made by his Nose and his Forehead : But the pleasantest Fancy is that of *Barnabas*, or whoever else was the Author of that ancient Epistle : 1. We read that *Abraham* Armed all the Men in his House, that the Number of them was 318. Now who would imagine, that in this there should be any Mystical Signification of the Cross ? And yet, as awkward as this appears, that Author could easily shape it into a Cross ; For, according to him, those two *Greek* Letters, I. H. the two first of the Name *IHSVS*, are signified by the 18. because *in* do in *Greek* stand for just that Number ; and then by the 300. is meant the *Greek* Letter τ , which stands for 300. and is it self the Figure of a Cross. So that 318, the Number of *Abraham's* Servants, was a clear Prophecy, that *Jesus* should be Crucified. Herein *Barnabas* is followed by several others, particularly by *Clemens Alexand.* * who a little after applies the 300 Cubits of the Ark to the same purpose.

* *Strom.*
Lib. 6. *P.*
M. 656.

purpose. What pity was it, that *Abraham* and *Moses* did not understand *Greek*, that they might have been enlighten'd in these Mysteries? These pretty Fancies were unhappily lost to them and all the *Jews*, because in their Language they will not bear at all. 'Twere endless to reckon up the ridiculous Whims they had about this Matter. Now, these idle Notions and simple Misapplications of Scripture made way for the like Practices. This Notion, for instance, that under the Old Testament almost all things did prefigure the Cross, and that nothing could be done, neither Sailing, Plowing, Digging, &c. without the Sign of the Cross, occasioned some to entertain an Opinion of some extraordinary Vertue in the Sign it self, and made them think it might be of singular Service to Christians themselves to make use of the Sign. These Pretences might have deceived Sound and Orthodox Christians, as we see they did afterward; but it is probable, that the Hereticks did first improve them to this purpose; for the first that we find does expressly ascribe Vertue to the Cross is *Valentinus*, who in his Medly of Christian and Pagan Theology, makes *HORUS* a Confirmer and Preserver of his Thirty *Æones*, and to this *Horus* he gave divers Names, according to its different Vertues; as it did establish and confirm, he call'd it the Cross †; but as it did divide and distinguish, he called it *Horus*: Upon which place in Dr. *Grabe's* Notes upon *Irenæus*, there is this pertinent

† *Iren. lib.*
1. c. 1. 96.
Tert. adv.
Valent. E-
piphan. lib.
1. her. 31.

Citation out of the *ἐκλογαί*, at the end of *Clem. Alex.* " That the Cross is the Sign of " that *Horus* that is in the (*Valentinian*) " *Pleroma* ; for it separates between the " Faithful and the Unfaithful, as *Horus* " does between the World and the *Pleroma*. By this it seems very probable, that they used to distinguish those of their own Sect by the Sign of the Cross. 'Tis certain, the *Carpocratian* Hereticks had at this time some such Custom, † who used to mark their Disciples, burning them in the hinder part of the Ear. Now *Carpocrates*, the Ring-leader of this Sect, was born at *Alexandria*, and it is not unlikely, that *Valentinus* (who is thought by *Epiphanius* to have been an *Egyptian*, and bred at *Alexandria*) might borrow somewhat of this Usage from his Country-man, and from the *Pagans*, * who used such Marks of Distinction upon various Accounts. 'Tis certain, he borrow'd most of his Divinity from the latter ; and if it may be supposed, that he thus took up this Usage, I think then the Testimony I alledged will prove, that the particular Mark, that he chose was no other than the Cross, which very well agrees with the Qualities which he ascribes to it. From *Valentinus* I suppose *Montanus* had it, and from him *Tertullian* ; and *Tertullian's* Authority went a great way with *St. Cyprian*, and others, toward the bringing in the use of it into the *African Churches* ; and this was the more easily done, because this superstitious Practice of the

† *Iren. lib.*
1. cap. 24.
Ecclog. in-
fin. Cl. Al.
P. M. 804.
Epiph. Har.
27. § 5.

* *Tert. de*
veland. vir-
ginib. c. 10.
Dempster.
not. in Ros.
antiq. p. 79.

the Hereticks carried in it a plausible pretence of a wonderful Respect to our Saviour's Passion, and therein the sounder Christians were very unwilling to be out-done by Hereticks, and therefore in a sort of Emulation soon embraced it; and because of its great Vertue, they at length added it to Baptism, to render it the more efficacious; nay, as our Author tells us, they reckoned every Sacrament incomplete without it. This Opinion seems most probable to me, however, I shall not be fond of it when a better Conjecture is offered. I shall here add what may confirm this, that Mr. Daille † thinks, the reason why they first added Ceremonies to Baptism, was that they might remove the Offence which the Heathens took, at the Simplicity and Plainness of the Ordinance; to which we may add (if what I have offered be allowed) that perhaps they perceived the Ceremonies used by the Hereticks served for that purpose, and gained them Profelytes. And that it may not be thought incredible, that the Catholicks who so much abhorred the Hereticks, should yet espouse this Rite of which they had been the first Authors and Inventers, we may observe that they most certainly did so in other Instances. Not to mention Images of a much later Date, which were first used by the *Carpocratians* * Hereticks; nor the Ceremony of Exsufflation, which seems to have had some kind of beginning among a Sect of the *Valentinians* ||. There is one that I shall take notice of, that

† De Cult.
Lat. Relig.
lib. I. c. II.

* Iren. ubi
supra.
|| Iren. lib.
c. 13. vid.
not Penard
& Pamel
in Tertull.
is p. 336.

is exceeding plain, and that is the Anointing in Baptism : This has undoubtedly the same Original I have assigned to the Cross.

Irenæus, describing the Baptism of the *Mar-*
 † *lib. 1. c. 18. § 2.* *cosian* Hereticks, has these Words, † “ After

“ that they anoint the hallowed Person
 “ with the Juice of Balm, (*Opobalsamo, the*
 “ *great Ingredient of our modern Chrism :*)

“ This Ointment they say is an Emblem of
 “ the sweet Odour that is over the Uni-

“ verse. Some of them say, it is needless

“ to bring the Person to the Water, but

“ mixing Water and Oil together, and pro-

“ nouncing certain Words, they pour it

“ upon the Head of the Person to be thus

“ Hallowed (*or initiated*) and this they

“ will have to be Redemption. *Epiphani-*

* *Har. 34. us* * has copied this out of *Irenæus* ; and
 † *qua est* *Petavius*, the Popish Advocate, in his Notes
 † *Marcof. p. 256.* upon the place, tells us, that this those Apes

did according to the Custom of the Catho-

lick Church, which they herein retained ;

and with him *Dr. Hammond* in this Point

agrees † ; and *Feuardentius* (a Person of the
 † *De Conf. c. 6. § 1.* same Kidney with *Petavius*) takes abun-

dance of pains upon the place, to prove

that this was a Rite in use among the Ca-

tholicks, and produces many Testimonies,

but not one that is both genuine and perti-

nent before *Tertullian*, who is the first that

mentions both this and the Sign of the

Cross ; and as he certainly received the one,

so it is highly probable he did the other

from the Hereticks also. This would be

the more probable, if what some have as-

serted

serted were true (which I confess I don't myself believe) that the Chrism and Cross were joined together, and that they were always Anointed in the Form and Figure of a Cross. But to return from this Digression, let us consider how our Author answers the Objection he has started.

I answer, (says he) 1. That the Objection supposes the Sign to be Lawful, and that it may be used upon weighty Reasons, and surely then the command of Authority will justify the practice of it.

I answer, That our Author is greatly mistaken; this Objection only relates to the Cross in Conversation, and not at all as it was used as a part of Worship; and therefore, though it were granted, that the first use of it were lawful, no Argument could be drawn from thence, to prove it lawful in the second sense, any more than it can be proved that Chrism is lawful in Baptism, because a Man may Anoint himself upon other Occasions: And therefore, all that should be inferred from this, is only the Lawfulness of that use of the Sign which this Objection refers to. But farther, this is only an Argument (*ad hominem*) from your own Principles, and such kind of Arguments are never supposed to contain any absolute Concessions from those Persons that make use of them. We would in Charity put the best Construction we can upon the Practices of the Primitive Christians, and where we cannot vindicate them, we would yet make what allowance we can to any Circum-

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Circumstances that may lessen their Guilt : And therefore we say, if you alledge the true reason of their using this Sign, their Case will admit of such an Apology as your own will not. But we deny at the same time, the Lawfulness of using this Sign even in that manner they did ; and our Judgment farther is, That Christ has left no uninspired Persons whatever Power to ordain and impose any such Ceremony as this in his Church, and so we cannot see what command of Authority will justify the Practice of it. We cannot think that Christ has left it in the Power of the Civil Magistrate to devise new Terms of Communion, or to clog his Worship with new Rites and Ceremonies ; and at present we cannot see, that there is a Command of any such Authority, which can be urged as obliging those Ministers who have not taken the Oath of Canonical Obedience, to use the Sign of the Cross, but they are left to their Liberty, and may omit it without the breach of any humane Law : Nor can we think any Ecclesiastical Authority sufficient for this purpose. Our Sense of this Matter is so fully expressed by a Learned Prelate †, that I shall content my self with his Words.

“ He that came to take away the insupportable Yoke of Jewish Ceremonies, certainly did never intend to gall the Necks of his Disciples with another instead of it : And it would be strange the Church should require more than Christ himself did, and make other Conditions of her Commu-

† *Stillingsf.*
Pref. to his
Irenicum.

“ Communion than our Saviour did of Dis-
 “ cipleship. What possible Reason can be
 “ assigned or given, why such things should
 “ not be sufficient for Communion with a
 “ Church, which are sufficient for Eternal
 “ Salvation? And certainly, those things
 “ are sufficient for that, which are laid
 “ down as the necessary Duties of Christia-
 “ nity by our Lord and Saviour in his Word.
 “ What Ground can there be, why Christi-
 “ ans should not stand upon the same terms
 “ now, which they did in the time of Christ
 “ and his Apostles? Was not Religion
 “ sufficiently guarded and fenced in then?
 “ Was there ever more true or cordial Re-
 “ verence in the Worship of God? What
 “ Charter hath Christ given the Church to
 “ bind Men up to more than Himself hath
 “ done? Or to exclude those from her So-
 “ ciety, who may be admitted into Hea-
 “ ven? Will Christ ever thank Men at the
 “ Great Day, for keeping such out of Com-
 “ munion with his Church, whom he
 “ will vouchsafe not only Crowns of Glory
 “ to, but it may be *Aureole* too, if there
 “ be any such things there? The Grand
 “ Commission the Apostles were sent out
 “ with, was only to teach *what Christ had*
 “ *commanded them.* Not the least Intima-
 “ tion of any Power given them, to impose
 “ or require any thing beyond what him-
 “ self had spoken to them, or they were di-
 “ rected to by the immediate Guidance of
 “ the Spirit of God.

I will add for the sake of our Author, that there may be many things which a Person may lawfully do, which yet it may be unlawful for Governours to impose, and which we should not be any ways obliged to observe if they did. For instance, it is very lawful for a Clergy-man to lead a single Life, but yet certainly, it is very unlawful to impose this, and to oblige every one, when he takes Orders, in a solemn Vow not to marry: And in like manner, should it be supposed lawful to use the Sign of the Cross, yet unless it can be shewn that a Satisfaction in this matter is such a Qualification of a Minister as the Church has Power, according to the mind of Christ to require and insist on, I cannot think a Man is obliged to observe any Rule made to enforce it: And if the Authority pretended is that of the Convocation or Church-Representative, we cannot think our selves bound in Conscience to observe their Orders. The Divine Right of our Convocations is not only generally disclaimed, but is most solidly confuted by the excellent and learned Bishop of *Sarum* †; and their Canons are not reckoned Valid in Law, according to the National Constitution. I will conclude this Head with the Observation of the above-mentioned Bishop *Stillingsfleet* *.
 " Without all Controversy, the main Inlet
 " of all the Distractions, Confusions, and
 " Divisions of the Christian World, hath
 " been by adding other Conditions of
 " Church-Communion than Christ hath
 " done.

† *Reflections on a Book, Intituled, Rights of an English convocation.*
 * *Ubi supra.*

“ done: With whom Mr. Chillingworth †† *Relig. of Prot. part 1. cap. 4. § 16.* does fully agree, whom the Reader may consult if he please.

2. *That we have as just Reason to use it as the Primitive Christians, because of the Blasphemous Contempt that is generally cast upon the whole Scheme of Christianity, particularly the Merits of our Saviour's Cross and Passion, by the Pretended Wits of our Age.*

If any thing follows from this, it is that we had need use it as frequently and upon all Occasions as they did, and not that we should use it in Baptism. It was before *Jews and Heathens* they used to cross themselves, to shew they were not ashamed of Christ's Cross; and what does that signify to our Author's purpose, who is pleading for a Ceremony performed in the Church, where the Pretended Wits of our Age who condemn the whole Scheme of Christianity, don't use to come? And farther, our Author forgets the Objection he is answering, and instead of talking of the Cross as a Testimony of our not being ashamed, he talks of it as a Remedy against Shame, as is plain from Cyprian's Words next cited by him.

So that St. Cyprian's Words are now pertinent *, *Arm your Foreheads, that the Seal * Epist. of God may be kept safe; as if he should 136. ad have said, Remember the Badge you took up. Thiber. on you in Baptism, and so long as you have that upon your Foreheads, never be ashamed or laughed out of Countenance, as to the Memory of our Saviour's Love, and the Foundation*

dition of your Hopes laid in his Death and Passion.

I should have passed over this Passage, it being of no moment in the Controversy, had not our Author so oddly Paraphrased it. St. Cyprian is not in that Epistle fortifying Christians against the Laughter and Scorn of *Jews* or *Heathens*, but he warns them of, and endeavours to prepare them for a fiery Trial, and a bloody Persecution coming upon them, and excellently commends to them the Advice of the Apostle, to take to themselves the whole Armour of God (of which, by the way, we find not that the Cross is any part;) and then adds,

*“ Accipiamus quoq; ad tegumentum capitis
 “ galeam salutarem, ut muniantur Aures ne
 “ audiant edicta feralia; muniantur Oculi
 “ ne videant detestanda simulachra; muni-
 “ atur frons ut signum Dei incolume serve-
 “ tur: That is, Let us take for the De-
 “ fence of our Head the Helmet of Sal-
 “ vation, that our Ears may be secured
 “ from hearkening to the terrible Edicts,
 “ our Eyes from regarding the abominable
 “ Idols, and our Foreheads that the Sign of
 “ God may be kept safe. Which (if I mi-
 stake not) is as though he had said, The
 Mark of God and of the Devil are inconsis-
 tent; you forfeit the Cross by Idolatry;
 as you hope therefore for the Salvation to
 which you are marked, you must abstain
 from Idolatry, even in spite of the most
 exquisite Torments.*

But

But this Paraphrase of our Author brings to my mind a Remark of the Learned Mr. *Joseph Mede*; who in his excellent Treatise of the Apostacy of the latter times, gives us several Instances of that Apostacy, and of the Fulfilment of that part of *Daniel's Prophecy*, Chap. xi. 38. which he thus renders; *Together with God in his Seat, he shall worship Mahuzzim* [Protectors,] and having shewn how exactly this was fulfilled, in the Honour given to Saints and Reliques, adds, † “ I might also put you in † *Inter opera*, p. 674.
 “ mind of the Term *Munimentum*, given
 “ to the Cross of Christ, and that so usual
 “ Latin Phrase of *Munire signo crucis*, to
 “ fortify (that is, to sign) with the Sign of
 “ the Cross. And it may seem a little
 strange, that our Author should say, * the * *Pag. 131.*
 Cross is a meer transient Sign, which abides not so long as to be capable of becoming an Object or Medium of Worship; and yet here, when he descants upon St. Cyprian's Words, should suppose that a Christian has it upon his Forehead a long time afterward.

I grant indeed, that the use of the Cross is an indifferent Ceremony, and that Baptism is as our Church declares, compleat without it, but what I contend for is fully proved, viz. That the Cross was used in the first Ages of Christianity; from whence it follows, that though it is not necessary, yet it is warrantable.

If it is an indifferent Ceremony, it is highly unreasonable to insist upon it with such Stiffness and Rigour as the Church has done:

done : And if Baptism is compleat without it, I hope the Church will not be angry with the Dissenters, that they desire no more than compleat Baptism. But I cannot but wonder, that our Author should think he has fully proved what he contends for, when there is one part of his Argument which he has not so much as attempted to prove. His Argument is plainly this, Whatever was used in the first Ages of Christianity is warrantable ; the Cross was used in the first Ages of Christianity, therefore it is warrantable. Both the Premises are denied by his Adversaries, and of the first he takes no notice at all, of the latter he has given us, as I have shewn, but very poor Evidence ; but were that ever so strong, his Conclusion will not hold unless he prove the other Proposition also.

Our use of this Sign is not in the least like the Popish use of it ; for (1.) We admit of no visible Crucifixes.

The Force of this Argument I do not well understand. It is no Proof, that you do not use one Sign as they do, because they use another more than you. I might as fairly argue the contrary, because you admit of Visible material Crosses, which have more Affinity with this Sign than a Crucifix ; and these are too common among you. And it is to the Immortal Honour of Dr. R. Cox, Bishop of Ely, the Beginner of the Quarrel at Franckfort, that he was for introducing the use of them, and therefore consulted *Cassander*, a moderate Papist, concerning

cerning the particular Form or Shape that he should chuse †. And I suppose it will † *Vid. Cas-*
 not be denied, that Arch-Bishop *Laud*, and *Sanct. Episc.*
 some others in his time, were for bringing ^{20.}
 Visible Crucifixes into use; and that at a
 considerable charge he repaired some in his
 own Chappel-Windows, which were almost
 ruined. And such Visible Crucifixes are
 still admitted, whatever our Author says to
 the contrary. And concerning them, I shall
 transcribe from Mr. *Prynne* *, a notable * *Cant.*
 Remark of Bishop *Mountainue*'s, who speak- *Doom. p. 2.*
 ing of Images, has these Words; "The ^{205.}
 " setting of them up, suffering them to
 " stand, using them for Ornaments, for
 " helps of Memory, of Affection, of Re-
 " membration, cannot be abstracted to my
 " Understanding, from Reverence and Ho-
 " nour simply in due kind. It is farther
 very remarkable, that many fine Pictures,
 and particularly of Christ upon the Cross,
 are got into the Book of Common Prayer;
 and one would think, that one may as well
 guess by the Book of your Devotions, what
 you admit of, as by any thing. Perhaps
 some may think, this is only the Printers
 and Booksellers contrivance, for their own
 Gain, though contrary to the mind of the
 Church: But this charitable Interpretation
 can hardly be allowed by him, who consi-
 ders how abundantly Jealous the Church is
 of the Honour of that Book. She cannot
 reasonably be supposed to have so patient-
 ly suffered this, had she resented it as any
 ways injurious or dishonourable to the
 Book.

A considerable Author in the late Dispute chose therefore to lay this upon the Papists, as an Artifice used by them to insnare the common People ; and that they might have a Hand in this I will not deny, but I fear, the fine Cuts that are prefixed to the Treatises of some eminent Church-men will evidence, that it was not universally distasteful to the Church. Mr. *Prynne* tells us how fond Arch-Bishop *Laud* was of those Popish Pictures ; and that he ordered the Bibles which were filled with them, to be called, *The Arch-Bishop of Canterbury's Bibles*. And since the Alterations, which were made after the Restauration, were generally according to the Hearts desire of those of his Kidney, it is not improbable, that those pretty Pictures might have had a helping-hand from some of his old Friends, whose Design the Reader may easily imagine.

Nor have any of our Writers ventured to say, with Mr. Baxter †, That a Crucifix well besuteth the Mind and Imagination of a Believer.

† Christian Directory.

But I have the Charity to think, that none of your Writers question the Truth of this ; for whoever will read the whole Paragraph will see, that Mr. *Baxter* designs in these Words no more than this, That a Believer's Mind ought to be frequently and much affected with Christ's Death, together with all the Circumstances of it.

And that it is not unlawful to make an Image (of a Crucifix) to be an Object or Medium

Medium of our Consideration, exciting our Minds to worship God.

This Passage in Mr. *Baxter* is about the distance of a Page in Folio from the other ; I shall cite it more at large, that his meaning may be the more obvious : “ It is not
 “ (says he) unlawful to make an Image
 “ (out of the cases of Accidental Evil before named) to be *Objectum vel Medium*
 “ *excitans ad cultum Dei*, an Object or Medium of our Consideration, exciting our
 “ Minds to worship God : As a Death’s-head, or a Crucifix, or an Historical Image of Christ, or some holy Man ; yea,
 “ the sight of any of God’s Creatures may be so holily used, as to stir us up to a
 “ worshipping Affection, and so is *Medium cultus, vel efficienter* : — So that it is
 “ lawful, by the sight of a Crucifix, to be
 “ provoked to worship God ; but it is unlawful to offer him that Worship by offering it to the Crucifix first, as the sign,
 “ way or means of our sending it to God. By this it appears, without any Comment, what Mr. *Baxter*’s meaning is ; but as I am resolved never to defend any Man in what I do not believe my self, I do own this Passage, however qualified, does still very much offend me. I doubt not to say, that Mr. *B.* in this went contrary to the famous Champions of the Protestant Cause, and I verily believe to Truth it self : But then will Mr. *Bennet* (for the Casuist himself does not) assert, that none of their Writers have said as much as Mr. *Baxter*.

Bishop Mountague was one of Their Writers, and he in his Gage approves of Images for Three Uses; "*Institutio rudium,*" "*commemoratio historie,*" & "*excitatio devotionis*"; the instructing the Ignorant, the remembrance of the History, and the exciting Devotion: And this is full as much as can be charged upon Mr. Baxter. He tells us too, "That the Pictures of Christ, the Blessed Virgin, and Saints, may be made, had in Houses, set up in Churches, Respect and Honour may be given unto them, the Protestants do it, and use them for helps of Piety, in Remembrance, and more effectual Representing of the Prototype. And this (if I mistake not greatly) is a considerable strain higher than Mr. Baxter. I might likewise cite to this purpose, his *Appeal & Origines Ecclesiasticae*; as also, the *Altare Christianum* of Dr. Pocklington, another Writer of the Church of England, who has Passages more offensive than Mr. Baxter's; but he who has a mind to see more of this matter, may consult Mr. Prynne, whence I took these. *Vide Cant. Doom.* p. 203. and elsewhere.

† *Cant. Doom.* pag. 103.

* *Life of A.B. Laud,* p. 229.

Farther, Mr. Prynne † tells us, That Arch-Bishop Laud, in a Speech against *Sherfield* in the Star-chamber, defended the use of Images in the Churches; and that he justified the picturing of God the Father in the form of an Old Man, out of *Dan. ix.* Dr. Heylin * indeed denies, that he justified the painting God the Father in the shape of an

an Old Man, and says, that herein he was Misrepresented, and that he only gave the Reason which induced some Painters to that Representation. A Man would be ready to guess, by the Arch-Bishop's Violence and Zeal against *Sherfield*, and his procuring a Thousand Pound Fine to be laid upon him, for only breaking such a Picture; that he was no great Enemy to the Painters way of Reasoning; but however, the Doctor acknowledges, that the Arch-Bishop shew'd in that Speech, how far the use of painted Images, in the way of Ornament and Remembrance, might be retained in the Church: And as this seems to justify Mr. *Prynne's* Account, so it is sufficient to my purpose; the Arch-Bishop carrying the Matter as far as Mr. *Baxter*.

I shall add, That Mr. *Hooker* (by whom you say in the next Words, is truly expressed the Sense of the Church of England) does make the Sign of the Cross to be of the same use, that Mr. B. does a material Crucifix. I shall cite some Passages out of that place in Mr. *Hooker*.

“ If Men of so good Experience (as *Seneca, &c.*) and Insight in the Mayms of
 “ our weak Flesh, have thought those fancied Remembrances available to awaken
 “ Shame-facedness, that so the boldness of
 “ Sin may be stayed ere it look abroad,
 “ surely the Wisdom of the Church of
 “ Christ, which has to that use converted
 “ the Ceremony of the Cross in Baptism,
 “ it is no Christian Man's part to despise,
 “ espe-

“ especially seeing that by this means where
 “ Nature does earnestly import Aid, Reli-
 “ gion yieldeth her that ready Assistance,
 “ than which there can be no help more
 “ forcible serving only to relieve Memory,
 “ and to bring to our Cogitation that which
 “ should most make ashamed of Sin. The
 “ Mind, while we are in this present State,
 “ whether it contemplate, meditate, deli-
 “ berate, or howsoever exercise it self,
 “ worketh nothing without continual Re-
 “ course to the Imagination, the only Store-
 “ house of Wit, and peculiar Chair of Me-
 “ mory.—— Shall I say, that the Sign
 “ of the Cross (as we use it) is in some
 “ sort a means to work our † Preservation
 “ from Reproach? Surely, the Mind,
 “ which as yet has not hardened it self in
 “ Sin, is seldom provoked thereto in any
 “ gross and grievous manner, but Nature’s
 “ secret Suggestion objected against its Ig-
 “ nominy as a bar; which Conceit being
 “ entred into that Palace of a Man’s Fancy,
 “ the Gates whereof have imprinted upon
 “ them that holy Sign, which bringeth
 “ forthwith to mind whatsoever Christ
 “ hath wrought or we vow’d against Sin,
 “ it cometh hereby to pass, that Christian
 “ Men never want the most effectual tho’
 “ silent Teacher, to avoid whatsoever may
 “ deservedly procure Shame: So that in
 “ things we should be ashamed of we are
 “ by the Cross admonished faithfully of
 “ our Duty at every Moment, when Ad-
 “ monition doth need.—— The solemnest
 “ Vow

† Caro sig-
 natur ut a-
 nima muni-
 atur. Ter-
 tull.

“ Vow that we ever made to obey Christ,
 “ and to suffer willingly all Reproaches
 “ for his sake, was made in Baptism; and
 “ among other Memorials to keep us
 “ mindful of that Vow, we cannot think
 “ that the Sign which our New-baptized
 “ Foreheads did there receive, is either un-
 “ fit or unforcible, the Reasons hitherto
 “ alledged being weigh’d with indifferent
 “ Ballance. — Seeing therefore, that to
 “ fear Shame which doth worthily follow
 “ Sin, and to bear undeserved Reproach
 “ constantly, is the general Duty of all
 “ Men professing Christianity, seeing also
 “ that our Weakness, while we are here
 “ in this present World, doth need, to-
 “ wards Spiritual Duties, the help even of
 “ corporal Furtherances, and that by rea-
 “ son of Natural Intercourse between the
 “ highest and lowest Powers of Man’s
 “ Mind in all Actions, his Fancy or Imagi-
 “ nation carrying in it that special Note of
 “ Remembrance, than which there is no-
 “ thing more forcible, where either too
 “ weak or too strong a Conceit of Infamy
 “ and Disgrace might do great harm, stand-
 “ eth always ready to put forth a kind of
 “ necessary helping Hand; we are in that
 “ respect to acknowledge the good and pro-
 “ fitable Use of this Ceremony, and not
 “ to think it superfluous, that Christ has
 “ his Mark applied unto that part where
 “ Bashfulness appeareth, in token that they
 “ which are Christians should be at no
 “ time ashamed of his Ignominy. But to
 F 4 “ pre-

" prevent some Inconveniences which might
 " ensue, if the over ordinary use thereof
 " (as it fareth with such Rites when they
 " are too common) should cause it to be
 " of less Observation or Regard, where it
 " most availeth, we neither omit it in that
 " place, nor altogether make it so Vulgar
 " as the Custom heretofore hath been.

Thus far Mr. *Hooker*, whom I have the
 rather cited thus at large, that the Reader
 may see what strange Weakness the De-
 fence of this Cause betrays even a Man of
 his Judgment into. Now let us compare
 him and Mr. *Baxter* together. 'Tis evi-
 dent, they both speak of a Visible Sign of
 Christ's Death, only Mr. *B.* speaks of a
 Material, Mr. *H.* of an Immaterial or Aeri-
 al one. They both of them think the Sign
 or Image useful to excite Memory or Con-
 sideration: Mr. *H.* thinks it useful upon
 the account of the part to which the Sign
 is applied; and thinks, that because that
 holy Sign is imprinted on the Gates of a
 Man's Fancy (*i. e.* his Forehead) it must
 necessarily keep out that which is evil, and
 may cause Shame. I will not presume to
 determine from whom Mr. *H.* borrowed
 this Argument, but I know it was made
 use of by others before him; and it is upon
 this very Account that *Aquinas* † will have
 the Chrysm applied to the Forehead, *Prop-*
 † *ter propinquitatem imaginationis*. Now a
 Man might be ready to think, that since
 such Advantage is owing to this print up-
 on the Gates of a Man's Fancy, that the
 more

† *Summa*
 pag. 3. qu.
 72. Art. 9.

more legible and plain it is, the more useful it is like to be ; and that therefore according to this Notion, they took the wisest course who made the Print and Character indelible, *viz.* by burning a Cross with a Red-hot Iron in the Forehead of the Children when Baptized ; or if my Devotion would not lead me to this Severity, yet certainly, if I were of Mr. H's Mind, I should with the Papists frequently reprint that Sign upon my Forehead ; and should not only say with Mr. B. that a Crucifix well *beseteth* the *Imagination* of a Believer, but that a real visible Cross well beseteth the Forehead of a Christian ; and I am grossly mistaken, if that would not much better answer the end Mr. H. proposes.

It methinks, however disagreeable Mr. B's Opinion is, it is yet intelligible, that a Man by seeing a Crucifix may be put in mind of Christ crucified, and so of worshipping him. But how Mr. H. should make his Cross serve to relieve Memory, is to me as yet an inexplicable Mystery. It seems plain to me, that the Memory must here relieve it self ; and that a Man must first remember actually the Cross, before he will be thereby put in mind of Christ crucified, and what relief then will this give to the Memory ? Must it not as much exercise the Memory of a Christian to think of the Cross made over his Forehead when an Infant, as to think of Christ crucified ? One would think, that Mr. H's way should rather be a Burden than a Relief to the Memory

mory of a Christian ; because in this way there is somewhat more to be remembred than was otherwise needful (I am to remember the Cross, that so I may remember Christ crucified) and because I suppose a Christian will be oftner in hearing and reading God's Word, put in mind of Christ crucified, than of the Cross in Baptism, and therefore will the easier remember the former, without any need of burthening it self with the Remembrance of the latter.

The Cross might indeed be said to relieve Memory, if it would bring to our Remembrance Christ crucified, though it were not it self first actually to be thought of by us ; but I confess, I fear that Man will never think of Christ crucified at all, that thinks not of him till he is brought to his Remembrance by the Cross that was made over him in Baptism : But Mr. H's dark Expressions seem to shew, that he was of another Mind. He makes the Cross to be a faithful and constant Monitor of our Duty, a most effectual Teacher to avoid Sin, &c. and this he argues from the part over which it is made ; and one would be ready to think therefore, it must be one of these Three Ways : Either,

1. By vertue of God's Promise and Blessing, as it is in those Sacraments which we use ; which being instituted by Christ, are attended with his Blessing according to his own Promise, and so the effect and advantage of them is produced : But this I presume will not be pretended. Or,

2. By

2. By some sort of Incantation, as the Reverend Bishop of *Sarum* tells us, it was used in Baptism †, but this I imagine will be rejected likewise: And therefore,

† *Four disc.
cours. pag.
291.*

3. It must be in some Natural way, according to the general Course and Operation of second Causes; and this Mr. *H.* seems most plainly to intend, that this Sign being made over a part so near the Seat of Fancy, being printed upon the Gates of it (*though only made in the Air, and perhaps never seen by us in our whole Lives*) stands there (*though a transient Sign*) like some Centinel to keep from entering into that noble Palace, any thing that may cause shame, and does whenever we need by a physical sort of Power, give us a helping-hand. It is a pity Mr. *H.* has not shewn us how all this is performed by the Cross: But it is enough for one Age to start this Notion, and to leave it to the next to give a full Account and Explication of it, which to say the truth of it, is not to be expected from a meer Divine; and therefore, I would commend the Consideration of this to some of the brave Virtuoso's of our Age, Men nicely acquainted with the Secrets of Natural Philosophy, that they would give us a good Account of this admirable Phenomenon, which I think cannot be solved, by any thing that has been hitherto said in Natural Philosophy.

And methinks, if Mr. *H.*'s Opinion be just and true, we must acknowledge, that the Cross in Baptism does confer Grace in a most

most singular manner ; and I fear we must not only incourage the Popish Practice of introducing new Sacraments into the Church, but their Doctrine likewise, in making them confer Grace, *ex opere operato*.

Farther, the Reader may observe, what Titles Mr. H. bestows upon the Sign of the Cross : He styles it *Christ's Mark* ; so that it should seem, that this is made the Badge of our Christianity. But till the *Dissenters* see it proved, that Christ has left the Magistrate or Church Power of devising what shall be the Mark and Badge of his Disciples, they will hardly consent to have this Badge set upon their Children ; nor will they esteem it an indifferent thing what is made Christ's Mark, since he has himself already appointed one.

Again, he calls it a *Holy Sign*. Now I would fain know, wherein the Holiness of it does consist, and who it is that has set this Stamp upon it. We account the Papists Superstitious in ascribing Holiness to Reliques, Crosses, and other things to which it does not belong ; and Mr. H. seems liable to the same Charge, and that perhaps with some Aggravation too. The Papists, for instance, do not esteem this Sign to be so Holy, but that any Person upon any occasion may use it ; but Mr. H. is against the *Vulgar* use of it upon this reason, least the ordinary use of it should cause this Holy Sign to be of less Regard and Observation ; and therefore you must know, that it is now reserved to the Priest, as his peculiar

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Province, to make a Cross; and if a Man were to guess at the reason of Customs and Usages in the Church of E. by Mr. H. he would be ready to suspect, that that is the reason why the Cross is not used in private Baptism; for tho' he is not for making this holy Sign of the Cross Vulgar (*i. e.* confines the making of it to the Sacred Office) yet he scruples not to † assert the Validity of Baptism administred by Women, a Practice not heard of in the Christian Church before Ter-
tullian's time (who inveighs * more than once against it, and seems to || intimate that it was but beginning in his time, even among the Hereticks) and is directly opposite to the Sentiments of Cyprian †, Basil *, Epiphanius ||, and several other of the Fathers, and the Author of the Apostolical Constitutions †, who all appropriate the Power of Baptizing to the Sacred Office: But it should seem now no great matter, how Vulgar God's holy Sign is made, so that Persons do not presume to affix the holy Sign of the Cross: So applicable to such Men is that of our Lord * to the Scribes and Pharisees, * Mat. 15. in much the like case. If the Reader desires 9. Mark 7. to have the Application, I had rather he 7, 8. should fetch it from that || great Man mentioned in the Margin, than that he should || Bp Stil-
have it from me, though it were but as a lingf. Iren. p. 6.
Transcriber.

The Sense of our Church is truly expressed by Mr. Hooker, who † says, That between † Eccl. Pol. the Cross which Superstition honoureth as l. 5. p. 348. Christ, and that Ceremony of the Cross which serveth

† Eccl. Pol.

lib. 5. § 62.

* De Bapt.

c. 17.

|| De Praesc.

Her. c. 41.

† Epist. 70.

p. 190.

* Ad Am.

phil. can. 11.

|| Adv. her.

79. quæ est

Collyrid.

† l. 3. c. 9.

* Mat. 15.

9. Mark 7.

7, 8.

|| Bp Stil-

lingf. Iren.

p. 6.

† Eccl. Pol.

l. 5. p. 348.

serveth only for a Sign of Remembrance, there is as plain and great a Difference, as between those brazen Images which Solomon made to bear up the Cistern of the Temple, and that which the Israelites in the Wilderness did adore.

If I did not believe this to be the Sense of the Church of *E.* I must have a very low Opinion of her Honesty; her Sense is, that she is not Superstitious in her Practice, and the same is the Sense of every Church in the World: This is the Sense of the Church of *Rome* her self, whose Writers frequently alledge these brazen Images of *Solomon*, to defend their Practice; and from them I suppose it was borrowed. But perhaps the Difference is not so plain and great in it self, as it is in the Sense of the Church of *E.* It must be confess'd indeed, that the Papists do honour the Cross as they do Christ, as appears by their Writers; and that the Church of *E.* do disavow and abhor any such thing: But yet it is to be considered, that for the making the Image in the Wilderness there was no Warrant at all from God, only from *Aaron* his High-Priest; but for the making those brazen Images in the Temple, there was Direction undoubtedly given from Heaven, without which Protestants do generally conclude the making them had been sinful; whereas there can be no Plea of any such Authority for the use of the Sign of the Cross; either in the one or other use. And because I have observed, that our Adversaries are pleas'd to

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urge us sometimes with the Examples of David, Solomon, and Hezekiah, &c. as warranting the Additions made to the Worship of God ; I desire they would try if they can give any clear proof, that these things were done by them of their own Heads, and without special Warrant and Direction from God himself. We find God was very strict in his Charge to Moses, † to see that he did all things according to the Pattern shewed him in the Mount ; and is it to be thought that he was more Indifferent about the Temple than the Tabernacle ? Or that his Directions or his Pattern was not as exact for that which was to continue the longest ? Or again, did not these noble Kings know very well what God had said with Relation to his Worship ? * *What thing soever I command you, observe to do it ; thou shalt not add thereto, or diminish from it. † Ye shall observe to do as the Lord your God hath commanded you : you shall not turn aside to the right-hand, or to the left ?* Can they be supposed to look upon the People only obliged by these Commands ? and upon themselves as more at Liberty than Joshua, Moses's Successor, to whom God speaks thus ; * *Only be thou strong and very courageous, that thou mayest observe to do according to all the Law which Moses my servant commanded thee : turn not from it to the right-hand or to the left ?* This is not probable at all to him who considers the nature of that Dispensation ; nay, it is certainly false, as appears by express Texts of Scripture. As God

† *Exod. 25.*

9. 40.

Ex 26. 30.

Ex 27. 8.

comp. with

*Numb. 8. 4.** *Deut. 12.*

32. comp.

with Chap.

4. 2.

† *Deut. 5.*

32.

* *Josh. 1. 7.*

God gave to *Moses* a Pattern of the Tabernacle, so he gave to *David* a Pattern of the Temple, and of all other Alterations made by *David* or *Solomon* in the Service of God, and this Pattern *David* gave to *Solomon*, 1 Chron. 28. 11, to 19. Then *David* gave to *Solomon* his son the pattern of the porch, &c. And the pattern of all that he had by the spirit — All this, said *David*, the Lord made me to understand in writing by his hand upon me, even all the works of this pattern. And accordingly *Solomon* ordered all things either according to the Commandment of *Moses* or *David* his Father: 2 Chron. 8. 13, 14. Even the Courses of the Porters were fixed by this Rule, as *David* the Man of God had commanded. And by the same command of God *Hezekiah* afterward ordered Matters, 2 Chron. 29. 25. and 30. 12. I only desire the Reader to consult all these places, and especially 1 Chron. 28. from the 11th to the 19th, and I dare say he will see this matter cleared fully to him.

I shall add here, that our Author bringing in these Words presently upon his Citation of Mr. B. and setting them in Opposition to his, seems to leave it to the Reader to imagine, that Mr. B. approved of the Popish Superstition in the Honour they give the Cross; which if he did, he acted very unfairly, it being so plainly (as I have shewn) contrary to Mr. B's Sense.

Ours is a meer transient Sign, which abides not so long as to be capable of becoming an Object or Medium of worship, any more than words we use in worship may do. And

And yet Mr. H. makes it useful in the same way, that Mr. B. does a Crucifix or Death's Head, &c. and tho' it has been said, that you do needlessly agree with the Papists in the use of this Sign, making it a part of Worship, yet I suppose you were never accused of worshipping the Cross; nor was it ever said, that you do every thing that the Papists do: But yet, however transient this Sign is, it is capable of being made an Object of Worship by some Men. The Papists hold, that such a Cross may be worshipped; and there have been Persons in the World, that have worshipped that which had no being at all, but was the pure effect of Fancy and Imagination.

2. Our use of this Sign is nothing like the Popish use of it, for the Papists use it on all Occasions.

And therein they agree with the Primitive Church, whose Authority you alledge in your behalf; and if the Authority of *Tertullian*, &c. be a sufficient Vindication of your Practice, it is likewise of the Church of *Rome's*, in that wherein you differ from her.

And at Baptism they use it much oftner, and so different from our way, that it is not used at the same time, nor with the same Words that we use it with.

The Repetition of it will not be thought vain, if the matter be weighty, and proper to move pious Affections, according to what † See *Abr.* we are † told about Prayer; and certainly, *Pag. 94.* our Brethren think the Cross to be a weighty matter; who prefer the imposed use of it to

† See Pag.
176.

the Church's Peace; and it must be thought to move pious Affections if it bring to our Remembrance Christ crucified, &c. The Papists use it at the same time the Church of E. does, according to your own account, † that is, immediately after Baptizing with Water in the Name of the Father, &c. and some reason why it is not used with the same Words may be hinted afterward.

As to the second Pretence, that the Sign of the Cross is a new Sacrament, I answer, that we all agree, That a Sacrament is an outward and visible Sign of an inward and spiritual Grace given to us, ordained by Christ himself, as a means whereby we receive the same, and as a pledge to assure us thereof; and therefore, since we never supposed that the Cross in Baptism could confer Grace, nor ever made the least pretence to a Divine Appointment for it, we ought not to be charged as introducing a new Sacrament.

For my part, I cannot think it worth while to manage Controversies about Words not found in the Scriptures. According to Men's different Opinions, and Definitions, they will give the same thing different Names. The great thing in question is, Whether Christ has left any uninspired Persons Power to institute such a Badge as this of those that are his Soldiers. We think, that the Power of instituting such a Badge belongs to Christ, the Captain of our Salvation; and that he has not authorized the Magistrate or Church to devise or appoint any such thing. I confess, I cannot be

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be of the mind that our Author and some others seem to be of, that Jesus Christ himself alone can institute a Sacrament, so that the Institution of his inspired Apostles should not be accounted sufficient: In this I heartily acquiesce in the Judgment of the Reverend and Learned Bishop of Sarum †, That † Upon the Article, p. 269.
 “ whatever his (Christ's) Apostles settled
 “ was by Authority and Commission from
 “ him; and therefore it is not to be denied,
 “ but that if they had appointed any Sacra-
 “ mental Action, that must be reckoned of
 “ the same Authority, and is to be esteem-
 “ ed Christ's Institution, as much as if he
 “ himself when on Earth had appointed it.
 Our Author seems to require more than an Apostolical Institution, *vis.* the express and immediate Institution of Christ himself (and thinks that the *Catechism* does so likewise) for he seems well pleased with *Sr. Basil*, that he reckons it an *Ecclesiastical Constitution or fixed Law of the Church from the Apostles Days*. Though the *Dissenters* approve of your Definition, yet if you should pretend to lay this stress upon it, they will with his Lordship take liberty to be of another mind; and I believe no foreign Confession will be found to lay such a stress upon this matter. I confess, we have no more Sacraments that may be lawfully retained in the Church, than those two which Christ himself while on Earth did appoint; and this is the reason why we own that those Words are well added in the *Catechism*: But what a strange and self-contradictory

Charge would this be? If it were ordained by Christ there were no need to call it a new Sacrament, or to scruple the lawfulness of the use of it. The Charge therefore against you is, that you have introduced that which in all other respects, but that of a Divine Appointment, has the nature of a Sacrament; that you have brought into the Church (if you will bear with the Expression) an humane Sacrament, which we look upon as a matter not to be found in your Commission; and here I cannot but with pleasure take notice to the Reader, that I have the same excellent Person (whom I mentioned before) again on my side: His Lordship declares, that the Sign of the Cross has been sacramentally used, which according to the Notion of our Author would be impossible.

† Bp Burnet, 4 Disc.
p. 291.

“ We find (says † his Lordship) the Primitive Christians used the making a Cross in the Air, or upon their Bodies, on many Occasions; afterwards, when a Divine Vertue was fancied to accompany that Ritual Action, it was used in Baptism, as a sort of Incantation; for with the use of it the Devil was adjured to go out of the Person to be Baptized: Such a Usage of it made it a *sacramental* and superstitious Action; and if it had still been retained in that Form, as it was in the first Reformation of our Liturgy in K. Edward VIth's Days, I do not see how it could be justified. I desire the Reader would carefully observe with reference to this most excellent Passage.

1. That

1. That his Lordship is of Opinion, that the Cross was first brought into Baptism upon a mistaken Fancy, from an opinion of a Divine Vertue that accompanied it ; and really, it is highly reasonable to judge thus with his Lordship in favour of them ; for they would have been a very trifling and impertinent sort of People to bring it in, if they had not had some such Imagination: But certainly, since the reason that introduced them to bring it in was a mistake, it becomes us now to cast it out, or at least not to alledge them in our own Vindication.

2. That his Lordship thinks, that we are only to consider what vertue is ascribed to this Sign, that we may be able to judge, whether it be used sacramentally and superstitiously.

3. That in the Liturgy his Lordship speaks of, the Cross was used before, whereas it is now used after Baptism. Immediately after the first Prayer, the Priest was to ask, what the Name of the Child should be ; and when the God-fathers and God-mothers had told the Name, then he was to make a Cross upon the Child's Forehead and Breast, saying, " N. Receive the Sign of
 " the Holy Cross in thy Forehead, and in
 " thy Breast, in token that thou shalt not
 " be ashamed to confess thy Faith in Christ
 " crucified, and manfully to fight under
 " his Banners, against Sin, the World, and
 " the Devil, and to continue Christ's faithful
 " Soldier and Servant unto thy lives end.
 After this indeed, the Devil was adjured to

go out of the Person ; but it is not expressly said, that it was in Vertue of the Cross. Whether the Church of E. still ascribe Vertue to it or no, we shall have occasion to enquire in the next place.

If it be said, that we make the Cross a Sign betokening our Faith and Christian Fortitude, because we apply it in token, that hereafter he shall not be ashamed to confess the Faith of Christ crucified, &c. and that therefore we make it an outward Sign of an inward and spiritual Grace. I answer, we own it to be a significant Ceremony, as all other Ceremonies are ; for we do not account a Ceremony innocent, because it is insignificant and impertinent ; but yet we deny it to be an outward and visible Sign of an inward and spiritual Grace ; for our Ceremonies are not Seals and Assurances from God of his Grace to us, but Hints and Remembrances of some Obligation we are under with respect to him.

Our Learned Author does not care nicely to consider this Objection, but very slightly passes it over, as though it were of no manner of weight, and gives not a direct answer to any part of it. He grants it to be a significant Ceremony, but what is that to the purpose ? Why is he so loath to grant it to be an outward and visible Sign, since it is most manifestly such ? And the Reader may here take notice of the thing signified by it, that is, according to the Canons, *the Merits of Christ*. The Words that I now refer to in the Canon are these (speaking of the Primitive times) " At what time, if any
" had

" had opposed themselves against it, they
 " would certainly have been censured as
 " Enemies of the Name of the Cross, and
 " consequently of *Christ's Merits, the Sign*
 " *whereof* they could no better endure.
 Now I conceive the meaning of this is, that
 the Cross is not only an Emblem of the Me-
 rits of Christ, but that it is likewise a
 Pledge to assure us of our Interest therein.
 The Foundation of this Interpretation of
 the Canon is the Canon it self, in the *Latin*
Edition (which is as Authentick as the *Eng-*
lish) wherein the Words run thus ; "*Quo*
 "*quidem seculo quis huic signo se opposu-*
 "*isset, declaratus proculdubio fuisset pro*
 "*hoste ac inimico nominis crucis, & proinde*
 "*meritorum Christi, quorum illi tessera &*
 "*signum adeo displiceret.* These Words,
tessera & signum, give us a clear Interpre-
 tation of the Sign, that is meant in the *Eng-*
lish : The general Expression of a Sign is by
 the *tessera* restrained to that sort of Signs
 which are *Pledges* also, as I think *tessera*
 has properly that Signification. Now that
 which the Canon makes the Cross a Sign
 of, has been generally thought by *Prote-*
stants to be part of that which is signified by
 the Water in Baptism. The end of Bap-
 tism is Twofold ; Remission of Sins, and
 Regeneration ; with reference to the first,
 the Water signifies the Merits of Christ's
 Blood, through which alone they can be
 forgiven, whence are those Expressions of
 his washing us from our Sins in his own
 Blood, &c. With reference to the latter, it
 signifies

signifies the cleansing vertue of the Spirit of Christ. In this respect the Cross seems to be very derogatory to Baptism, as it is us'd to signify that which is intended by the baptismal Water; and there not being (which is worth Observation) in the whole Office, the least hint given that the Water in Baptism has any manner of reference to, or Signification of the Merit of the Blood of Christ: Which is not my Observation, but was made by Mr. *Mede* † long ago, who approves of it. Hitherto I conceive this significant Ceremony does well agree with the nature of a Sacrament, it is an outward and visible Sign.

† Works, p.
63.

The next thing that is started in the Objection is, that here is an inward and spiritual Grace; but this our Author very prudently passes over in his Answer. He does not care to grant, and yet is ashamed to deny, that Faith and Christian Fortitude are inward and spiritual Graces, as they most evidently are, and are as much the Gift of God as any spiritual Grace whatever. And the Cross is only fit for *Pelagians*, if it be not intended that through God's Assistance and Grace he shall not be ashamed, &c. Nay farther, it seems evident to me, that the Cross is made a Seal, Pledge and Assurance to us from God of his Grace; and thus (1) Dr. *Hammond* understands it, as I shall have occasion to shew from his own Words. (2.) Our Author thinks these Words of *Cyprian* now pertinent, wherein he calls it the *Seal of God*; and chuses himself

self that Expression of the Seal of God, it being in *Cyprian* only *Signum Dei*. (3.) The Words used at the making the Cross do seem plainly to intend this. The Words are, " We sign him with the Sign of the Cross, in token that hereafter he shall not be ashamed to confess the Faith of Christ crucified, and manfully to fight under his Banner against Sin, the World, and the Devil, and to continue Christ's faithful Soldier and Servant unto his lives end. If a Man designed to ascribe Vertue to the Sign of the Cross, and to make it a Seal and Assurance to us of God's Grace, I am apt to think he would find these Words would fitly express his Sense; for thus we ordinarily use those Words *in token*: If a Man say to another, I give you my Hand, *in token* that I will at such a time give you so much Money; the meaning is, I do now by this Sign assure you of it. If a Man at the bottom of an Obligation say, *in token* whereof I have set my Hand; the meaning is, for an Evidence, Assurance or Witness of it [*in testimonium*] the very Words used by *Alex. Alesius* for the rendring *in token* in the first Translation of the Common-Prayer. And farther, I imagine the positive strain in which the Words run, argues this: " We sign him with the Sign of the Cross, *in token* that hereafter *he shall* not be ashamed to confess, &c. and not that *he should* not or *ought not* to be ashamed, which would much better express his Obligation and Duty, if that were all that was designed; and there-

therefore, if the only meaning is, We sign him with the Sign of the Cross, to hint to him that it is his duty not to be ashamed, &c. and that he may hereafter remember it, though he now understands nothing at all of the matter, it is very darkly expressed, and the hint is very obscure and enigmatical, according to Mr. *Elias Petil*, a Presbyter of the Church of England, who renders these Words in token thus ; *† ἐν τῷ αἰνίσσασθαι.*

† Greek
Translat. of
the Litur-
gy.

In short, either the Cross is effectual for the end for which you use it of it self, or thro' God's Grace ; if the first be true, it is requisite to explain how it is so ; if the latter be true, answer the Reverend Bishop of *Sarum*, who tells us, * " That federal acts

* Upon the
Artic. p.
269.

" to which a conveyance of Divine Grace
" is tied, can only be instituted by him who
" is the Author and Mediator of the New
" Covenant ; who lays down the Rules
" and Conditions of it, and derives the
" Blessings of it, by what Methods, and in
" what Channels he thinks fit.

And this kind of significant Usages has ever been taken up, without any Imputation of introducing a new Sacrament : For, 1. The Jewish Church changed the Posture of eating the Passover from standing to sitting, in token of their rest and security in the Land of Canaan.

Very probable it is, that according to the differing Reasons of the times, there might be by God's own Order different Manners and Customs. This might be fairly supposed upon this single Consideration, that there were

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were inspired Persons among them. But I think we have it plain enough in the Scripture, that several things in the first Institution were only appointed to be observed by them in *Egypt*; such as the sprinkling the Posts of the Doors with Blood; and the like is to be judged of the Posture, and therefore though in *Exodus* they are commanded to eat it with their Loins girt, with Shoes on their Feet, and a Staff in their Hand; yet no such thing was commanded them after once they were got out of *Egypt*. See *Deut.* 16.

There was also an Altar of Witness reared on the other side Jordan.

It is obvious, that it was a very common Practice among the Patriarchs, to erect an Altar upon any particular occasion; and that this was done by them for two ends, to sacrifice upon it, and to leave it sometimes for a standing Memorial and Monument of any thing remarkable, that had happened in the place where the Altar was built. In the short History we have of them, we have no more account of the Direction they had for this from God, than of the Direction they had for sacrificing at all; but I suppose both might be nevertheless from God. Now when God gave particular Laws by *Moses*, to the Children of *Israel*, he altered many things that were lawfully used by them before, and particularly he forbade them the sacrificing (as it was common before) in any place, and restrained it to that one which he himself should chuse,

chuse, *Deut.* 12. 5. and consequently it was not lawful for them to erect an Altar for that purpose: But there was not any Prohibition of Altars for the other use, as Monuments and Memorials of any thing remarkable; and such the Altar of Witness was, and of the same nature seems that Stone to be, which was set up by *Joshua* himself, *Chap.* 24. *ver.* 26, 27. and that which was set up by *Samuel*, *1 Sam.* 7. 12. But neither of them was designed to be holy, in bearing any part, or having any interest in the worship of God; but that which I am treating of was to shew, that though they were on the other side *Jordan*, they nevertheless were of the Children of *Israel*.

And the Synagogue Worship, Rites of Marriage, Form of taking Oathes, &c. were significant, and yet were all received in the purest times of the Jewish Church, and complied with by our Saviour himself.

I know not what it is that our Author refers to in the Synagogue worship, and therefore cannot give any answer to him: But I know when as innocent a Ceremony as could be, was look'd upon as Religious, and pressed as such, though it were but the washing Hands before Meat, &c. our Lord refused to comply with it. Rites of Marriage I reckon belong not to Worship, but were purely civil. As to Oathes, the Lawfulness of taking an Oath is easily proved from the Old Testament, or the New: Various Forms were used in both, but none is prescribed; some Form is necessary, and so that

that it be suited to the Nature and Design of it, it is no great matter what the form of taking it is. An Oath is a part of Natural Religion, confirmed by the Revealed. As it is an Appeal to God, it is a most solemn Religious act, and a Man is obliged to perform it accordingly, and not to swear by any false God. But as there is no Form prescribed in Religion, and it is in the power of the Magistrate to require me to take an Oath, the Form in which he renders it to me, is to be looked upon as a Civil testimony to him, and therefore may in any Form be taken, so that it favour not of Idolatry or Superstition.

The Christian Church of the first Ages used the same liberty, as appears by the Customs of the Holy Kifs, and the Feasts of Charity.

There is a great difference between natural Signs (as Kissing and Feasting together are such signs of Friendship and Love) and arbitrary ones, such as our sacramental Signs are, together with the Sign of the Cross. A Kifs, by the universal Consent of Nations is a sign of mutual Love, and as such was no doubt used by the most Primitive Christians, and not as a part of Worship. In like manner, Kneeling is a natural and ordinary sign of Humility and Reverence; and therefore our Author may observe, that though the *Dissenters* condemned the imposing it upon all in the Lord's Supper, yet they never charged that Imposition as the bringing in of a new Sacrament. But let it
fare

fare how it will with the holy Kifs, I suppose our Author will allow that it had better warrant than the Cross.

† Works,
Vol. 2. p.
774. & seq.

1 Cor. II.

The Feasts of Charity, if lawful, were no parts of Worship; but whether they were lawful as most think, or unlawful as † Dr. Lightfoot thinks, it is certain, they gave occasion to many Disorders; and what course does the Apostle take? Does he go about only to reform the abuse, retaining the Custom, and telling them how they might lawfully use it? No, but he lays them aside, and goes back to the Institution of Christ, *What I received of the Lord, I delivered to you.* Deliver us no more, and we shall easily agree.

I might farther instance in the Ceremony of Insufflation, which was used as a sign of breathing into them the good Spirit.

This is indeed an instance in all things parallel with the sign of the Cross; and since our Author thinks this so light a matter, he will do well to shew what this wants to make it Sacramental besides Divine Institution; if here is not an outward and visible Sign of an inward and spiritual Grace, &c. there is none at all. When our Author can vindicate this, we shall not need to dispute about the Cross.

The Baptized Persons stripping off his old Garments, in token that he put off the Old Man.

I should rather think the Original of this was, that he might shift his wet Clothes, if I could find any Evidence of the Baptized Person's

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Person's having any on, but really it was that he might go naked into the Baptifmal Water (which was a usual Custom for feveral Ages in the Christian Church) however, it was afterward according to the Primitive Genius curioufly allegorized.

The trine Immersion at the mention of each Person in the Trinity, to fignify the belief of that Article.

This was not in the Inftitution, and was an unnecessary Repetition of the Sacramental Action; That Article of our Faith is expreffed in the Words of Adminiftration, and fince Chrift did not inftitute this Sign of it, I don't fee what right Men have to do fo.

Now all thefe things were anciently practifed, without any Jealoufy of invading the Prerogative of Chrift, in inftituting new Sacraments.

This is indeed very likely, for it was while Men fleep that the Enemy fow'd the Tares; and it was through a want of fuch a Jealoufy that numberlefs Corruptions by degrees crept into the Church, and that at length Chriftianity did as much abound with Ceremonies as Judaism: But we difpute not what others have thought of things, but what efteem the things themfelves deferve.

3. *All the Reformed Churches, nay the very Diffenters themfelves, do ufe fome fymbolical Actions in their moft Religious Solemnities: For, 1. Their giving to the Baptized Infant a new Name, feems to betoken its being made a new Creature.*

Interpret

Interpret the *Dissenters* Practice from their own Declarations, as they do yours from the Common-Prayer, &c. Produce any of them that ever gave the least hint of any such thing. I confess, there would be some Ground for this, if they taught Children among the Principles of Religion, that their God-fathers and God-mothers gave them their Names in Baptism ; but I trust no such thing can be alledged. Nor can any thing be argued from their Practice, which is this, to ask what the Name of the Child is ; and then calling it by the Name, to baptize it in the Name of the Father, &c. and in this matter some Persons are the more cautious, because some ignorant People are ready to account that Ordinance a Ceremony of naming the Child ; and I suppose our Author knows very well, that it is a common thing for the Laity of the Communion of the Church of *England* to talk, as though a Child was not Christened by washing with Water in the Name of the Father, &c. in Private Baptism, but were then only Named ; and that the Christning is afterwards, at the Solemnity of God-fathers and the Cross in the Church.

Nay, the Dissenters generally give it some Scripture Name, or one that betokens a particular Grace, and this is an outward and visible Sign, and this sometimes of an inward and spiritual Grace, and yet they do not think it a new Sacrament.

I thought that Words were always expected when Men talk of outward and visible

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ble Signs ; and I conceive that here is nothing more, unless our Author thinks the *Dissenters* write that Name upon the Infant in token of the Grace : But I hope our Author will not pretend, that it is all one to give a Child a Name, and to institute a general Badge of Christian Profession ; and if our Author knows that the *Dissenters* lay any stress upon what he mentions, he will do well to shew it. They act in this matter as others do ; for Scripture Names are generally chosen by Christians ; but I imagine it is not commonly understood by those that chuse the Name, what particular Grace is signified by it ; nor do I think that ever any *Dissenter* scrupled to Baptize a Person, because he was named *Henry, Edward, &c.*

The Dissenters plead for sitting at the Lord's Supper, because it is a Table-gesture, and expresses Fellowship with Christ, &c. This is an outward and visible Sign of an inward and spiritual Grace, and yet it is not accounted an additional Sacrament to that of the Lord's Supper.

A Man must be in some one posture in receiving the Lord's Supper, and by what better Rule can a Man guide himself in fixing upon a posture for himself, than the Example of our Saviour and his Apostles, especially if the posture used by them appears to be suitable to the Ordinance ? It is evident, that our Lord did design in a more familiar manner to treat his Disciples in that Sacrament, and seems therefore to have chosen the ordinary Table-gesture. Now should

it be supposed, that there is a mistake as to the reason why Christ and his Disciples sat at it; certainly we may argue from his own and his Disciples sitting, that such a posture is lawful, and is very safe, and is preferable to those that have neither Command nor Precedent.

And lastly, suppose that an Independent, when he is admitted into their Church-Covenant, should signify his assent by holding up his Hand, or the like; this is an outward visible Sign of no less than a new state of Life, that is, of being made Members of Christ's Church, &c. and yet it was never charged upon them by the Presbyterians; as introducing a new Sacrament.

And yet I am mistaken in the Presbyterians, if they would have been so partial as to spare them, if they had as much deserved to be so charged as some others. I know not of any such Practice among the Independents as that which our Author speaks of. That which seems to have given occasion to this is, That they admit none into their Communion, but with the consent of the Church, who therefore do by some Action signify their consent: So that a Person's holding up his Hand signifies no more than this, I give my consent that he should be admitted into our Society: And what resemblance is there between this and the Cross? Is the common way of voting in Societies any thing like an honourable Badge, whereby a Person is dedicated to the Service of Christ. Whatever account our Author makes of such Instances, I am per-

persuaded they will not be much valued by those that will impartially and candidly consider and compare things.

But it is objected, that our Convocation, cap. 30. declares, that by the Sign of the Cross the Infant is dedicated, &c. Now, say they, Baptism is it self a Seal of Dedication to God, and therefore our dedicating the Infant by our own invented way of the Sign of the Cross, is adding a new Sacrament.

I cannot but think this Objection has weight in it. Sacraments are Federal Rites between God and us, and do not only import the Love and Grace of God to us, but likewise our Restipulation and the Dedication of our selves to God; so that though it were granted, that the Sign of the Cross wanted somewhat beside Institution to give it the intire Nature of a Sacrament; yet, according to that part of the Canon, it seems chargeable with assuming to it self one essential part of Baptism. In answer to this we are told,

That Dedication may properly signify a Confirmation of our first Dedication to God, and a Declaration of what the Church thinks of a Baptized Person, and the Sign of the Cross is the Medium of this Declaration.

But how Dedication can properly signify this I confess I don't understand. Methinks there is very little Propriety of Speech observed by Men that make Dedication, Confirmation of Dedication, Declaration, and a Medium of Declaration, to be all one and the same thing. I should be unwilling that any one should go about to give the Signi-

fication of my Words after this rate, and so
 I suppose would our Author likewise, espe-
 cially if he pretended at the same time to
 tell what they *properly* signified : But how-
 ever I observe, that he denies not that the
 Objection would be good, if the Cross were
 used as a Dedication to God ; and thereby
 I think he has fairly given away the Cause
 from the Convocation. I will lay before
 the Reader the Words of the Convocation, by
 which he may judge whether it be thus or no.
 The Words are, " This Sign they (*viz. the Pri-*
 " *mitive Christians*) did not only use them-
 " selves with a kind of Glory, when they met
 " with any Jews, but signed therewith their
 " Children when they were Christned, to de-
 " dicate them by that Badge to his Service,
 " whose Benefits bestowed on them in Bap-
 " tism the Name of the Cross did represent.
 " Here the Reader may plainly see, that they
 ascribe indeed to Baptism the Benefits that
 are bestowed on us, but that they ascribe
 the other part, our Restipulation or our De-
 dication to God, to the Sign of the Cross ;
 and therefore, toward the Conclusion of the
 Canon we are told, That " the Church of
 " *England* hath retained still the sign of it in
 " Baptism, following therein the Primitive
 " and Apostolical Churches, and account-
 " ing it a lawful outward Ceremony, and ho-
 " nourable Badge, whereby the Infant is de-
 " dicated to the Service of him that died up-
 " on the Cross, as by the Words used in the
 " Book of Common-Prayer it may appear.
 What the Canon refers to in the Book of
 Common-Prayer I have already cited, and
 can

cannot find any Ground for the proper Signification our Author has given us of the Convocation's Words.

That this is the meaning of our Church is evident, if we compare the Office of Baptism and the Canon together : Both the Rubrick and Canon say, That Baptism is compleat without the Sign of the Cross : It is expressly said, we receive this Child into the Congregation of Christ's Flock, before it is signed with the Cross.

As though it were not a proper way of speaking to say, *we receive this Child*, when we are doing so, or are going about it ; if it had been said, *we have received this Child*, it would have plainly appeared, that the Child was received into Christ's Flock before. This is, I confess, taken care of in some Translations of the Liturgy, which were made since the Convocation, tho', as evident and express as our Author judges it to be, not in all. But since the Convocation has given us this as the Sense of the Liturgy, we are to allow it, that the Child is admitted into Christ's Flock by Baptism before the Sign of the Cross, and therefore it only remains to enquire, to what purpose the Cross is used. The Opinion of our Author, that the Cross is a Confirmation of our Dedication, puts me in mind of an Observation which some have made, and which perhaps will give some light into this matter. They tell us then, that the Ancients, who used Confirmation, made it immediately to follow Baptism, (which is plain from *Tertullian de Baptismo*) and that when the Cross was brought into Baptism, they made

use of it as a Medium of Confirmation. Afterwards it was thought fit to defer Confirmation till some time after Baptism, and at length it was made a distinct Sacrament in the *Roman Church* (for the *Greek Church* to this very Day retain the Custom of the Ancients, and do not separate Confirmation from Baptism.) The Church of *England*, tho' they hold that the laying on of Hands in Confirmation is to certify the Persons by that Sign of God's Favour and Gracious Goodness toward them, yet deny it to be a Sacrament; but have followed the Example of those that deferred Confirmation till some time after Baptism, and the Example of those that made it immediately follow Baptism, and so have two Confirmations, and are perhaps the only Church in the World that ever had. This Observation that was made long since, the Discourse of our Author does sufficiently confirm; and this to me seems the true reason, why though the Papists use the Cross in Baptism, yet they use it not with such Words as the Church does. They reckon that the design of Confirmation, which she looks upon as the design of the Cross. They distinguish between the Family of Christ, into which we are admitted by Baptism, and his Militia, the Sign and Character of which is Confirmation: Now this Distinction seems to be espoused by the Church, who makes Baptism indeed to be the Sign of our being received into Christ's Flock, but uses the Cross as the sign whereby we are dedicated to Christ's Service as his Soldiers; to which purpose I will set down

down the Words of Dr. Hammond, which I think are very remarkable †. “ For the Cross † *His Works, Vol. 2. last part, p. 242, 243.*
 “ in Baptism : First, it is known to all, that
 “ our Christian Course is a *spiritual warfare*
 “ under Christ our Great General. Now it
 “ is, and always hath been *customary* over
 “ the World, that in a *Militia* there should
 “ be some *Banner* or *Ensign*, to which eve-
 “ ry one should *resort*, and fight under it :
 “ This hath *Custom* made *decent* among all ;
 “ and supposing that *Custom*, the *Omission* of
 “ it in an *Army*, is *indecent*, yet not so as
 “ things *dishonest*, or breaches of the *Law*
 “ of *Nature*, are *indecent* : And the *Cross*
 “ on which Christ was *crucified*, the *Emblem*
 “ also of that *state* that every *Christian* en-
 “ ters into, a *constant* *couragious* *Patience*
 “ for all *Afflictions*, was by the *Primitive*
 “ *Christians* thus used, as their * *Symbol* or * *Signo cru-*
 “ *Ensign* ; and every Man that is *inrolled* in *cis actio*
 “ the *Christian Militia*, is by him that *inrolls* *Christiana*
 “ him, *signed* with it ; and this *Practice* be *describ. tur.*
 “ ing thus *founded*, and received in the *Aug.*
 “ *Church*, *St. Augustine’s* Words are worth
 “ *remembring*, and cannot be denied to have
 “ *truth* in them || ; *Signum crucis nisi adhi. || In Joh.*
 “ *beatum, sive frontibus credentium, sive ipsi Tr. 118.*
 “ *aqua qua regeneramur, &c. nihil rite per-*
 “ *ficitur* ; Unless the *Sign* of the *Cross* be
 “ used either to the *Foreheads* of the *Belie-*
 “ *vers* (who are *Baptized*) or to the *Water*
 “ it self, by which we are *regenerate*, it is
 “ not *duly performed*, i. e. with such *Cere-*
 “ *monies*, as by *Custom* of the *Church*, the
 “ *Rule* of *Decency*, belong to it. — And if
 “ instead of the *frequent* use of it among

“ the *Ancients*, even *before* the cumbersome
 “ weight of *Ceremonies* came in, we in this
 “ our *Church* retain it only in our *solemn en-*
 “ *trance* into *Christ's Camp*, in token that
 “ we mean *valiantly* to fight under his *Ban-*
 “ *ners*, and in *confidence* that he that thus
 “ signed to *Constantine Victory from Heaven*,
 “ (*ex te victa, in this Overcome*) will thus
 “ give *Grace*, and *seal* to us *Victory* over
 “ our *Ghostly Enemies*; What question can
 “ can there ever be of the *perfect Decency* of
 “ this *Usage* among us?

I have cited the *Doctor* thus largely, that
 the *Reader* may see, not only that he ap-
 proves of the *Distinction* I mentioned before,
 but that he does in the most express terms,
 ascribe vertue to the *Cross*, and makes it (as
 to *Constantine*, so to us) a sign of *God's*
Grace to be given to us, and a *Seal* of our
Victory over our *Ghostly Enemies*.

Since therefore the *Person* is dedicated in
Baptism, and the *Baptism* is acknowledged
 compleat without, or before the *Sign* of the
Cross, we cannot be thought to dedicate in
Baptism, and to dedicate by the *Cross* again;
 but the *Dedication* by the *Cross* must be some-
 thing very distinct from the *Dedication* of *Bap-*
tism; that is, the one is the *Sign* of *Dedica-*
tion, and the other the *Dedication* it self.

This is a wrestling of the *Canon*, which
 distinguishes the use of *Baptism* and the
Cross, viz. that in *Baptism* *Christ's Bene-*
fits are bestowed on us; but that by the ho-
 nourable *Badge* of the *Cross* the *Infant* is de-
 dicated to *Christ's Service*, i. e. to fight un-
 der his *Banners*, and be his faithful *Soldier*.

The

The Canon no where says, that a Person is dedicated by Baptism, and a Man may justly doubt whether they thought so. But however, since our Author grants that the Child is dedicated by Baptism, I suppose he will not scruple to grant, that Baptism is a dedicating Sign ; and therefore, I would gladly know what need there is of any other Sign, or for what tolerable use Men can bring in a sign of a Sign : After this rate, you may bring in another sign, to be a sign of that sign of the first Sign, &c. in *infinitum*. I leave it now to the Reader to judge in this matter. If the Child be before dedicated to God and the Service of Christ, by God's own sign of his Covenant, there is no need of renewing it, or of any Confirmation of it, or of any Medium to declare it. It is impertinent and daring to add any such Confirmation to those federal Acts, which are sufficiently valid and efficacious of themselves : But if the Child is not dedicated by Baptism (which seems to be the sense of the Canon) then he has not answered the Objection : And I humbly move, that these Words may be here considered which we meet with in the Rubrick before the Office for Publick Baptism, where this is given as one reason why it should be publickly Administred ; *That the Congregation there present may testify the receiving them that be newly Baptized, into the number of Christ's Church.* In these Words it seems sufficiently imply'd, that Persons are not received into the Church by Baptism, but that *that* is done presently after Baptism, that is, by the Sign of the Cross ;

Cross ; and then the Words of the Convocation will look like a poor Evasion, that does not agree with the Book of *Common-Prayer*.

So that it is plainly no other than a Declaration the Church makes of what the Baptized Person is admitted to, and what Engagement he lies under ; which Declaration is therefore made in the name of the Church in the Plural number, We receive the Child, &c. and do Sign him, &c.

The Words are indeed a Declaration of the Engagement the Baptized Person is under ; but whoever reads them may plainly see, that they are more than so. The Sign of the Cross is (according to Dr. *Hammond*, and I think the *Common-Prayer* also) Christ's Banner, under which the Infant is to fight against, and overcome all his Enemies ; and the Doctor's Paraphrase upon these Words **IN TOKEN** (*viz. in Confidence that God will thus (by this Sign) give Grace, and seal to us Victory over our Ghostly Enemies*) is natural and easy ; but the other kind of Glosses that some put upon them, are forced and awkward : But since our Author tells us, that this is done in the Name of the Church, that is, of all that are present, this will not only affect the Clergy, but Laity also ; and a great deal of Satisfaction is necessary about the Lawfulness of this Sign, before a Person should consent to be present at this part of the Office, since he must thereby necessarily have a hand in this Action. I cannot tell whether our Author will care to declare himself of that Opinion, † that the Cross is only a Sign from Man to Man. His Discourse might

† *Protest. Reconcil. part. 2. pag. 30. And Bishop Morley's Words, in Mr. Calamy's Abr. pag. 294.*

might seem to give such a hint ; for that best agrees with a Declaration ; and to say the truth, this would be the most favourable Account of it, if it were true ; but the Canon will not allow of it, because it is a Badge whereby a Person is dedicated to Christ's service. I am not concerned much whether this be our Author's Sentiment or no. It is a Remark that deserves to be observed, by those that think they can with that pretence justify their Practice ; and especially I would commend the express Words of the Canon, to the Consideration of a late Author, † who speaking of the Sign of the Cross, tells us, " We do not use it as it is used in the Church of Rome ; for they use it as a Dedicative Sign to God, we only as a Token, or Declarative Sign to Men.

From what has been said I hope it appears, that our Office of Baptism has nothing in it that may in the least justify a Separation from us.

The Reader must judge as he sees cause ; for my own part, tho' I should be as willing as any Man to see my way clear into the Church, being sensible of the Mischief of our Divisions, yet I must profess, after all our Author and some others have said, I cannot see any thing that satisfies me of the Lawfulness of having any thing to do with this Cross in Baptism, either as a Clergyman or Lay-man. I shall end with proposing what, it is obvious, may be a means of a happy Adjustment of this Controversy, and so of promoting our Union. Let the Cross in Baptism be left indifferent, as you say in it self it is. I admire the Temper of
our

† *The Case stated between the Church of Engl. and the Dissenters, by E. S. D. D. p. 69.*

our first Reformers, who in the end of the first Edition of the *Common-Prayer*, have this Rubrick : “ As touching Kneeling, *Crossing*, “ holding up of Hands, knocking upon the “ Breast, and other Gestures, they may be “ used as every Man’s Devotion serveth “ without blame.

Imitate their Moderation, and let this *Crossing* (about which there is a great variety of Opinions) be left to every ones Liberty. Let no Minister be forced to use it in Baptism, and let no Parent be forced to have his Child signed with it ; but where Minister and Parent cannot agree, let the Parent procure one that will comply with his desire : By this means no Man’s Conscience will be gall’d, Love and Unity will be promoted, which is a matter of far greater Moment than Uniformity in such a Ceremony ; and let the Reader judge, whether those Men can ever be thought to have a just value for the Church’s Peace, and to be clear of the guilt of Schism, who will retain such a Ceremony which they acknowledge unnecessary, and which they know their Brethren account sinful, and by which therefore they necessitate their Departure from them.

God Almighty pity a divided Nation, and give us to understand and practice the things that relate to our Peace, before the evil Day come upon us, and we (through our Divisions) become a Prey to our common Enemy, and be forced to see our fatal Error and Mistake, when it is too late to retrieve the Mischief of it. *Amen.*

F I N I S.

P O S T S C R I P T.

THAT which the rather induces me to publish these Papers at this time, is that I may have an opportunity for this Post-script. I have been some time concerned in a Controversy with Dr. *Wells*, and have just received his *Numb. 4.* and I take this opportunity to let the World know, that I don't think it worth a particular Answer: And I doubt not, all Judicious Persons will be so far from wondering that I despise this last Piece of the Doctor's, that they will rather wonder that I honour'd so many of his Former with particular Answers. And indeed, to what purpose is it for us to Dispute any longer, when we can't agree about the Rule by which this Controversy is to be determined? I am for that Rule which is given by *Inspiration of God, and is sufficient to make the man of God perfect, thoroughly furnished for every good work;* and for comparing one Scripture with another, to determine the meaning of it: But the Doctor, because we can't agree about the meaning of that Rule, is for appealing to the Notions and Practices of the most ancient Writers. This Rule, as I have shewn, the Doctor will not keep to; and I do not see that we are more likely to agree about their meaning, than the meaning of the Scriptures. Nor are the Scriptures so obscure as he would represent them, about the number of Ministerial Orders, as any one may see by his not alledging any Scripture-Arguments on his side, and by the poor Answers he gives to those I have used. He
pretends

pretends not to answer my Argument from the Church at *Ephesus* ; and I think that from the Church at *Jerusalem* is very convincing. I ask therefore, did not our Lord at his Ascension leave a Church at *Jerusalem* ? In what Hands did he leave it ? Was it under Government or no ? Was it left to the Government of one, or of a Plurality with equal Power ? There is good reason for that Title which is by some of the Ancients given to this Church, of being the *Mother-Church* ; and she is in my mind the best Platform for all other Churches to be modell'd by. I do not much regard the Story of St. *James*, if such a kind of Episcopacy be assigned him as I have all along allowed to have been in the Church, I will not deny him to have been Bishop of *Jerusalem* ; but for more than that, I will not rely upon the Credit of *Hegesippus*, whose Account of him (as we have it in *Eusebius*) is most demonstrably false in several Matters of Fact.

I denied, that the *Apostles Office* was ever split into two Offices : Upon this the Doctor makes himself merry, as he has me, and I doubt not all his other Readers ; for I defy any *Heracitus* to forbear laughing at the Reading such Writings. All the Powers of Preaching, Ordaining, &c. originally belonged to one Office, but afterwards were supposed to be all of them in Bishops, and some of them in Presbyters ; so that here were two distinct Offices supposed to be made out of one ; if the Doctor likes not the term of *splitting*, he may call it what he pleases. I deny the Supposition to have any
Founda-

Foundation in Scripture ; and tho' the Dr. would have us believe that Bishops alone succeed the Apostles, yet *Irenæus*, an *ancient Writer*, affirms that Presbyters do ; so that Bishops and Presbyters were both supposed to be their Successors. I cannot, therefore, much blame my Expression, nor do I know of a better to put in the room of it. The Doctor knows, whose Argument a Wager is according to our *English Proverb*: I appeal to the Judicious, whether the Doctor has not done more to confirm the Proverb, than to answer his Design of exposing his Adversary.

That the Pope was an Usurper signifies nothing to our Controversy ; for if the Notions of the times are the Standard of the several Offices, my Argument is unanswerable, let him be guilty of Usurpation never so : If the Notions of the times are not the Standard, we must then come to the Scriptures. Farther, if Men's mistaken Notions of an Office will make it nul, then the Offices of all Popish Bishops and Priests are nul, since this was taken to be part of their Office to maintain the Jurisdiction of the Pope, and to offer a Propitiatory Sacrifice for the Living and the Dead. Farther, the Doctor knows whose Offices are then nul, even those who are supposed to derive their spiritual Jurisdiction from the Prince. —————

The Doctor lays about him to prove what I never denied to be the Papist's Notion, leaves out what I argued upon ; and after all, if he will look a little farther, he will find that Father *Paul* tells us, the *Spanish Bishops* could not gain their point, *Li Spagnuoli*

nuoli si partirono senza alcuna cosa ottenere.
 I can't tell wherein I have not acted the Part of an *honourable* Adversary in the business of the *Imprimatur*: Did I go about to to assert it was refused him? Was not the Mistake own'd, and the Reasons that led in-to it alledg'd? But the Doctor represents me as stiling the *Imprimatur* *honourable*, so long as 'twas thought to be refused him, but says, that as soon as I found it prov'd, that 'twas not refus'd him, then it was represented by me as not being *honourable*, but such as might be had without *Distinction*, or any Man might have for asking. Whereas I say expressly, that I cannot entertain so dishonourable a thought of the University as this: And I appeal to the University, and all the World, whether the Doctor has herein acted the part of an *honourable* Adversary. I shall only say, in Imitation of Arch-Bishop Tillotson, Methinks tho' a Man has all Logick, yet it might not be amiss to have some Conscience. But notorious Misrepresentations, base Calumnies, uncharitable Censures, and damnable Sentences, make a great part of the Doctor's Writings; and there is one thing which he seems to me to forget, tho' I think no Man should in any, and especially a Religious Controversy: I will therefore shut up this Controversy, by saying to him as Cyprian to Florentius, Epist. 66. p. 169. *Habes tu literas meas, ego tuas: in die Judicii ante Tribunal Christi utraq; recitabuntur.*

7 DE 61
 E R R A T A.

Pag. 41. l. 29. *pro* would not only *Sozomen's* Assertion in the 5th Chap. be false, *leg.* *Sozomen's* Assertion in the 5th Chap. would not only be false. Pag. 56. l. 16. *del.* i.

